

RELIGION IN LIFE

A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY

Vol. III

Spring Number, 1934

No. 2

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Business communications regarding subscriptions, etc., should be addressed to The Abingdon Press, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Entered as second-class matter January 16, 1932, at the post-office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. This number is the April, 1934, issue.

Subscription price, \$2.00 per year; postage free U. S. Possessions and Mexico; to Canada, 18 cents additional; other foreign postage, 30 cents; single copies, 75 cents.

Published by
THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK

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Printed in the United States of America

The Religious Situation in Germany To-day

PAUL TILlich

I

The Church Conflict

IN reading the news about the ecclesiastical conflict in Germany outsiders are apt to get the impression that the churches of both confessions, Roman and Protestant, have risen up to offer political resistance to the National-Socialist government. In this way they have come to cherish the hope that the conflict will result in a cleavage within the German people, becoming a menace to the powers at present in control. While refusing to venture any prophecy about the possible consequences of these events, I must quite expressly deny that the stand taken by the evangelical ministers has any consciously political character. Their resistance to the direct and indirect encroachment of the government into the affairs of the church must on no account be interpreted as a political fight. There are not a few national-socialists in the ranks of the fighting ministers; while very few former liberals and radicals are leaders in the opposing group. The majority of the insurgents belong to the old conservative party, their most active leader being a former submarine commander, now dismissed by the Reichsbishop. The character of their common action is not that of a political party, not even of an ecclesiastical political party, but rather that of an emergency-association striving to provide mutual aid by prayer, confidential communications, solidarity in sacrifice and, if necessary, in martyrdom.

It will help toward the comprehension of this state of matters, which may seem strange to outsiders, if I explain in outline the Lutheran conception of the relation of the religious to the political realm. Between these two Luther created a deep gulf. According to him it is not permissible to level criticism at the government of the state or to disobey its commands in any political matter, even supposing the government should be bad and its laws wrong and its ruling unjust or arbitrary. For all

governments, even bad ones, are invested by God with power to oppress the evil which always resides in human nature. Of course the bearer of governmental power is obliged by his conscience to rule in accordance with the dictates of natural justice and, whenever possible, of Christian love. But this is a matter which exclusively concerns his own relation to God. Christian people are never right in entering protests against any ruler, not even when dealing with revolution. They have the duty to suffer and the permission to pray to God for the ruler, who in every case enjoys his rule by the incomprehensible good pleasure and providence of God.

This Lutheran attitude, to which the Lutheran people have now been accustomed for four hundred years, must be kept in mind by everyone who desires a precise understanding of the ecclesiastical conflict in Germany. It presents, as it seems to me, particular difficulty to those who during the same period have grown accustomed to the very different Calvinistic view. From the very beginning the Calvinists claimed a certain right of resistance to the godless sovereign. They held that God should rule not only in heaven but also on earth, and that must mean in the state and in politics. They applied the idea of the kingdom of God to the kingdoms of this world by criticizing earthly powers from the point of view of the Divine Will. In this idea are rooted, among other things, our revolutionary Western democracy, and also the tendency of the church in this country to deal with all important political questions, making its criticism felt and rousing public opinion in regard to public affairs.

Those who are accustomed to such an attitude find it difficult, for example, to understand why Lutheran churches should remain silent in face of the present treatment of the Jews. But if you keep in mind the original Lutheran doctrine which I have explained, you should have no difficulty in understanding this. The problems of the Jew, of communism, of trade unions, even the problem of sterilization, are held to be purely political problems such as provide the church with no reason for raising its voice. But the moment questions of doctrine were involved, the church, as represented by the emergency association of ministers, began to organize its resistance. And, as you know, not without success. The Aryan paragraph was considered to be a new paganism attempting to force entrance into the church, while the enthronement of a national bishop as a religious leader (in the political meaning of leadership) was regarded as the establishment of a doctrinal authority—a most impossible and heretical idea for

the Protestant consciousness. In this country much astonishment has been expressed at the courage and perseverance shown by the fighting group. But this could not be surprising to anybody who had lived since his childhood within the sphere of the Lutheran attitude. Indeed it could have been predicted long before it came to pass. I hope therefore that you will no longer be astonished when you read either about the non-resistance in matters political or about the resistance in matters religious.

The question must however be raised whether, when we face reality, such a doctrine is capable of being upheld. And in raising this question it is important to keep the Roman Church in mind. Its doctrine resembles that of the Calvinist in claiming for itself the right of criticism even in the social and political realms. Accordingly Catholics have successfully resisted the Aryan paragraph, as applied not only to the church but also to Catholic schools, hospitals, and social organizations; and they have compelled the government to restrict the application of the sterilization law. I think, moreover, that the hidden struggle of the Catholics for education and other objects which are of vital interest to both church and state, has more direct political significance than the Protestants' open opposition to the encroachment of the state into the church's doctrine.

But I repeat my question: If the ecclesiastical conflict has no direct political aims, must we not allow that indirectly it has political consequences? There is one regard in which political results seem to me unavoidable. With the help of its scientific coadjutors the government has established a totalitarian state, that is, a state which occupies itself with, and controls, all sides of human life. Obviously such a claim conflicts with the absolute character of religion. Obligated by God's command to love him more than all things else, I must not give all my heart and all my mind and all my strength to the state. Religion declines every other claim to absolute validity but its own, and so also the claim of the totalitarian state. Christianity declines every other dogma but the Christian faith, and so also the racial dogma which is the foundation of the absolute state in Germany. Protestantism declines every absolute leadership but the Bible and conscience, and so also political leadership in so far as it conflicts with conscience. It necessarily follows from this that the very idea of a totalitarian state must challenge the opposition of the Christian Church; for this idea has itself a latent religious character. In this way the conflict which has arisen within German Protestantism will be driven to consequences that go far beyond

the aims of its instigators. The struggle is intended only as religious resistance to attacks made upon religion. But it must result in religious resistance to the fundamental political idea behind the present form of government. In this way there is implied in the religious resistance a political resistance against the latent religious claim made by the absolute state. Such, regarded from the side of politics, is the religious situation in Germany. The world does well in devoting its concentrated attention to this situation and to all that will happen in connection with it. For it is a situation of extraordinary importance both in regard to questions of principle and to the actual future of Protestantism, and indeed of Christianity as a whole.

II

The Conflicting Ideas

Taking for granted that the copious reports provided by the newspapers have familiarized you with the most important facts of the church conflict, I shall now lead your thought to the ideas that are here found in opposition. What is this new paganism which has arisen and taken hold of so many minds? How could it possibly have become so powerful? Well, there is a law of nature called the *horror vacui*, that is to say the tendency of nature to fill a vacuum. This law can be applied in many cases to the life of the spirit. And to put it plainly, the religious vacuum which has been produced by the development of Protestantism during the last two hundred years has provided an opportunity for those pagan forces which have existed generally in the human soul, and particularly in the German soul as represented in many parts of Germany. If we give the name of secularism to the outlook which has resulted from the development of thought since the age of the Enlightenment and the rise of rationalistic thinking, we may then say that Christian secularism has called out the hidden paganism in the German soul. We have thus to consider first Christian secularism and then the new paganism—both of course only in short outline.

Christian secularism is a movement which characterizes not only German Protestantism, but Protestantism and the modern world in general. That view of the world is secular in which the world is regarded as completely subjected to human reason, all holy, supernatural and divine elements being expelled from life and from the world. The transcendent

sphere is given room only beyond the boundaries of our world, being forbidden to break into it. For in *this world* mankind would build its wide and comfortable house, furnished with all the products of the rational control of nature. Neither God nor demons are permitted to trouble this edifice of human reason. Revelations and miracles are regarded as inconvenient encroachments by transcendent powers upon the slow but sure progress of human enlightenment and morality. No divine support is desired, no demonic attacks are feared. Things have become calculable and controllable; science having removed their irrational character—their holiness—which prevented mankind from touching them without feelings of veneration. The *tabu*, that is, the sacred untouchable character of things, whether animals or plants, elements or rocks, has disappeared. When thus controlled by human reason and used for human goals, things are subjected to a process of profanation, from which nothing is exempt—neither the things of nature nor the events of history, neither the relations of men in family and society nor the powers of state, nor yet the movements that occur in the depths of the human soul.

The idea of God is thus changed into a philosophical concept. God can be proved, or again he can be refuted, by rational methods. But an idea which can be proved by means of arguments that are more or less convincing cannot give me a foundation for my existence in face of eternity. Arguments for the existence of God presuppose the loss of the certainty of God. That which I have to prove by argument has no immediate reality for me. Its reality is mediated for me by some other reality about which I cannot be in doubt; so that this other reality is nearer to me than the reality of God. For the more closely things are connected with our interior existence, the less are they open to doubt. And nothing can be nearer to us than that which is at times farthest away from us, namely, God. A God who has been proved is neither near enough to us nor far enough away from us. He is not far enough, because of the very attempt we have made to prove him. He is not near enough, because nearer things are presupposed by which the knowledge of him is mediated. Hence this ostensibly demonstrated subject is not really God.

The idea of God must be the undoubted ground of all other ideas or else it is nothing. And in many regions of modern secularism it has become nothing. Modern atheism, spoken or unspoken, has arisen in all levels of society. Starting in the upper classes, it has penetrated more and more

into the proletariat. The capitalist and proletarian classes have been united in this attitude. But in Germany the atheistic tendency has been vehemently and openly expressed only by the proletariat and its leaders, while the upper classes tried to conceal it and to unite it with a vain religious liberalism. Christian ideology, being found useful in the support of the power of the ruling classes, was not given up. Thus the idea of God became completely powerless. The religious situation in Germany can only be understood in the light of this attitude on the part of the two classes. The capitalist class, though itself entirely secular, attempted to use—or rather to abuse—the idea of God in its struggle against the proletarian movement, the atheism of which was thus effectively attacked. The so-called “godless movement” was oppressed by the police, yet the oppressors were really standing on the same ground as the oppressed—on the ground of the complete profanation of the holy. This fight against proletarian atheism was a very powerful weapon in the class war. It was one of the weapons by means of which the German bourgeoisie, supported by the less secularized middle class, succeeded in defeating an independent proletarian movement. But it was not and is not a sign of any real Christian character in the upper class. In both classes secularism is in power.

Let me now say something concerning the relation of secularism to humanism. To some extent both words have a common reference. For the chief cause of secularization is the rise of humanism. When regarded only from the standpoint of humanity, and when measured only by the standard of human rationality, things lose their holy character and become profane. Yet there is an important difference. Humanism properly belongs to Christianity in so far as it teaches that man bears the image of God. Therefore Christianity without humanity is a paganized Christianity, in which the idea of God is penetrated by demonic qualities. Secularism on the contrary does not belong to Christianity, but is to be understood as a sort of decay of the humanistic element inherent in Christianity. There is but a thin line dividing secularism on the one hand from this demonic Christianity on the other. This line, so dangerous to follow, may be called Christian humanism. The Middle Ages deviated from it toward demonic Christianity, whereas the modern centuries have deviated more and more toward secularism. It is not that humanism has overcome Christianity, but that a decaying humanism has brought forth secularism, and with it that vacuum into which certain very non-humanistic powers have pene-

trated. In Germany this development has produced a secular view of the world without any disturbance on the part of transcendent powers, a view of nature without supernatural encroachments, a view of history without holy events or persons, and a view of mankind without holy laws and transcendent origins or goals. Thus we have a world to be explored by rational knowledge, to be controlled by technical science; a society to be educated and guided by rational principles; a human soul standing on its own ground, correcting and enriching itself by all the values of civilization; and an ideal of humanity without God or demons, that is, without any powers, whether from above or from below, which transcend its own.

None the less, this secularism is *Christian* secularism, its conception of humanity arising against the background of the Christian idea of love; its conception of the unity of the world presupposing the Christian faith in the creation of the world by God; its optimistic view of human history containing the Christian idea of the kingdom of God; its appreciation of the individual human soul being understandable only as the profane form of the belief in individual immortality; and so on. Modern secularism thus presupposes the centuries of Christian development. There is no such thing as secularism in general, there is only Christian or Greek or Indian or Islamic secularism. Only in this way can the modern religious situation be understood, and so also the religious situation in Germany to-day.

Humanism remains alive and powerful just so long as the religious background remains effective behind it, so that hidden religious enthusiasm informs its thoughts and actions. Only by this means has modern humanism found itself able to overcome the old religious attitude encouraged by the church. Since force must be met by force, it follows that only religious force can subdue religious force. Only the concealed religious forces of humanism have overthrown the open religious forces of the church. Therefore the moment the religious background of the humanistic movement began to disappear, in that moment the religious room in the human soul became, so to speak, empty. And into this vacuum two powers now penetrated.

The first of these remained within the boundaries of Christian humanism, but within these boundaries it attempted to provide a new enthusiasm, a new attitude to the present and to the future. The optimistic faith in the slow but certain progress of the human race was broken down. The realities of the class war betrayed a cleavage in society which made it neces-

sary to transcend the present and to struggle for a future order in which the idea of humanity is realized completely and for all men. The conception of the kingdom of God, transformed into the conception of an earthly kingdom of justice and peace, created a new faith and enthusiasm of a secular kind. There arose movements, reminiscent of Old Testament prophecy, directed to the attainment of a new and perfect state of mankind; movements which must be regarded as much more than merely political in character, even though they bear political names like socialism, communism, syndicalism and so forth, and although most of them were professedly atheistic. They had no understanding of their own religious background. Often it was merely a case of one religion struggling against another—a situation full of contradictions and dangers, contradictions between the ideology of thought and the reality of feeling and action, and the danger of losing the original enthusiasm and becoming as profane as bourgeois secularism itself. Actuated by an awareness of these contradictions and dangers latent in the proletarian movement, religious socialism (to which I myself belonged) endeavored to provide for them a religious interpretation and at the same time to bring to bear upon them a religious criticism. This implied an attempt to break through the boundaries of immanence and to renew the idea of a coming kingdom of God. This we tried to do without reverting to the old dogmatic conceptions of the ecclesiastical tradition. This religious socialism was a movement of the utmost significance for the Lutheran Church with its indifference to political life and social problems. But it did not succeed in its effort. The gulf between the secular orthodoxy of the Marxist political movements and the religious and ecclesiastical orthodoxy of the Lutheran tradition could not be bridged. Marxist orthodoxy rejected the religious interpretation of its ideas. At the same time Protestant orthodoxy, as represented by the famous theologian Karl Barth, himself a religious socialist in former days, denied any connection between the religious and the humanistic interpretations of the idea of the kingdom of God. Barth stressed and still continues to stress the purely transcendent character of religious hope and the purely immanent character of political programs. He does not admit the Christian background of modern secularism, nor does he accept the Christian interpretation of the proletarian movement. He severs all relations between the kingdom of God and human history; and he has had much success in spreading this doctrine, congruent as it is with the German Lutheran tradi-

tion as well as with the tendencies of bourgeois thought. In doing this he has helped to destroy the effects of religious socialism. And the defeat of religious socialism may be regarded as the beginning of the defeat of the German proletarian movement in general. For only a new religious enthusiasm, able to overcome the tendency to secularization, could have saved it. Such an enthusiasm did not appear, and the labor movement became extinct.

For there appeared another movement which attempted at the same time to transcend mere secularism and to displace both secular and religious socialism. This other movement may be called the new paganism. It is really pagan, for it denies the Christian presuppositions which, as we have seen, form the background of even the most secularist forms of humanism, including the secularist Marxism. This new paganism takes its stand upon different ground—the sacredness of blood and soil and power and race and nationality, values which are minimized by Christian ethics. We are right in saying that the powers from below, the unsubdued vital forces, have here risen up and broken through into the humanistic sphere, which they have thus destroyed. A demonic transcendence has overcome secularism and has attempted also to overcome the churches of both confessions.

The new paganism has attempted to penetrate into the German mind in several different forms. To begin with, nationalism in itself has a pagan background; and the more nationalism takes on a radical and exclusive character, the more this pagan basis is pushed into the foreground. The nationalistic idea cannot be considered to be pagan in itself; but it acquires a pagan character as soon as its claim becomes absolute, the idea of the nation now taking precedence over all other ideas, even over the idea of religion. When the nation claims absolute value, then it is claiming divinity for itself; and then it becomes a matter of indifference whether or not it acknowledges Christianity. Its mere existence involves the denial of Christianity. The ecstatic attitude manifested by the followers of the National-Socialist movement, the devotion offered to its symbols, the *tabu*-like quality of its supreme leader, are all irrefutable signs of its pagan character, which is, moreover, quite openly claimed, in speech and in writing, by some of its sponsors, and comes out clearly in the racial theory.

Paganism is openly disseminated by a number of groups outside the church, the most important of which is led by a former missionary, and

attempts to put into effect a kind of Aryan pantheism formed of elements derived from Indian and Christian mysticism. This movement, however, being abstract in nature and lacking any concrete or living symbols, has no chance of winning the masses.

Within the church, the radical wing of the so-called Faith Movement of German Christians has openly propagated the paganization of Christianity by attempting to abolish the Old Testament and to purify the New. But the defeat of this movement by the insurgent Protestants has not put an end to the pagan tendencies within the church. On the contrary, the remaining moderate wing of the movement, headed by the Reichsbishop, now freed from the radicals of his own party, is offered the opportunity of slowly impregnating the church as a whole. This danger is increased by the fact that the old type of preaching failed to reach the masses, in this way giving rise to a real problem which the church has failed to solve—and so giving the German Christians their chance.

In all these movements the old demons which were conquered by Christ may be said to be, in greater or less degree, rising up afresh to oppress both ecclesiastical Christianity and Christian humanism. The old pagan gods of blood and soil are demanding new worship and many are giving it; they are demanding that sacrifices be made to them, and many such sacrifices have been made, just as of yore. There are only two powers in Germany which are showing resistance—Protestant orthodoxy and the Roman Church. The fight they are making is the most exciting event in the present history of the church, because in it the profoundest problem of contemporary church history has become clearly visible. This problem is the problem of secularism. Both the churches in Germany are therefore struggling not merely against paganism as such, but also against its secularist background. It may be that the struggle against paganism within the church may be partially successful. I think myself that it will be so. But are we wise in hoping that the struggle against secularism will likewise succeed? Are we about to return to a new Middle Ages in which all humanism will be completely banned? Or will the struggle succeed only inside the church? And will the rest of society remain secularist until into the vacuum of such secularism there penetrates a new paganism—so that we shall have a small orthodox church as an island in an ocean of paganism? Or again will paganism itself create a new Middle Ages of its own, which will not be Christian? And if it will not be Christian, what will it

be? The truth is that we do not know toward what goals the course of events is now leading us in Germany, and in the world as a whole. We cannot tell whether or not the totalitarian state will overcome Christianity and produce a religion adjusted to its own character, as emperor-worship was produced in the later Roman Empire.

When thus regarded, the present religious situation in Germany assumes an extraordinary measure of importance for the understanding of the religious situation in all Christian countries, including America. For secularism rules all the world over; and the demons of paganism, the powers from below, are everywhere lying in wait, ready to break into the vacuum of a vain secularism. Perhaps in this country also humanism is in process of decay, becoming empty and vain, so that here also there are powers from below awaiting the opportunity to fill the vacuum with pagan contents. Perhaps we are facing a new paganism throughout the whole of Christendom. Perhaps, on the other hand, the example of Germany may open the eyes of other nations, rendering them immune to this pagan danger. If that should happen, then the German church would have become a sacrifice to save the rest of Christendom. In which case its sacrifice would not have been made in vain.

Mysticism and Preaching in the Modern World

RAYMOND CALKINS

THE topic may appear strange to you. It may seem almost a contradiction in terms. What has mysticism to do with our modern world? What message has this esoteric faith to offer to the disturbing and ominous conditions of the day in which we live? It is my own conviction that no preaching is sufficient for our present need which does not have its source and its inspiration in a mystical experience of God.

To understand this it is necessary to understand what we mean by mysticism. No word, Dean Inge has said, not even socialism, has been employed more loosely than mysticism. To some, it means a vague kind of sentimentalism. Thus, a mystic is a person who detaches himself from the practical interests of life, and lives in an interior world of ill-defined emotionalism. A mystic is an impractical idealist. To others, mysticism is an impossible kind of pietism, an eerie kind of spirituality to which the average religious person cannot attain. Perhaps it would not even be healthy for him if he could. Still others think of mysticism as a form of occultism, even of fanaticism. "It is, in a word, a kind of neurotic disease; it means having visions, performing conjurer's tricks, leading an idle dreaming and selfish life; neglecting one's business, wallowing in vague spiritual emotions, or being 'in tune with the Infinite.'"¹ And finally there are those who feel that it is Catholic piety, foreign to our Protestant tradition; or that it is a kind of Eastern theosophy, alien to the thinking of our Western world.

If mysticism were in fact any of these things, the modern preacher would do well to abjure it. Because it is a very different thing, it is of all things most necessary that he should understand it and possess it. For mysticism, properly understood, is simply that type of religion which is primarily grounded in a personal experience of God. Mysticism may be defined as that kind of religious experience of which the characteristic feature is *immediacy*. Mysticism is a direct, inward and convincing apprehen-

¹ Evelyn Underhill, *Practical Mysticism for Normal People*, p. 2.

sion of the Divine. Mysticism shifts the emphasis from external proof, external authority, outward authentication of any kind, and finds its ground of spiritual certitude in the report of inward experience, in an immediate awareness of God. Thus Rufus Jones defines mysticism as "the type of religion which puts the emphasis on the immediate awareness of one's relation to God, on a direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence."² And Miss Underhill says: "The mystic is the person who has attained the union with Reality in greater or less degree and who aims at and believes in such attainment."³

Now, thus understood and defined, mysticism begins to appear a normal experience to the normal man. Not one of us but has had flashes of insight in which Truth has come home to us directly and not through any mental process whatsoever. If only for a brief moment, we have seen it, and known it. These flashes of immediate revelation of reality are not confined to the sphere of religion. Thus we have mystics in business, in art, in every form of human endeavor. And it is precisely their mysticism which lies at the basis of their genius. The results which these arrive at have not been attained by slow and labored processes of thought. They have been "given" to their consciousness immediately. In the same fashion, mysticism lies at the heart of the highest form of religious experience. Truth is apprehended immediately rather than by any form of rationalizing. Mysticism does not rely upon logical arguments for the existence of God: it knows God because his existence and his spiritual nearness are matters of immediate consciousness. Thus, the mystic can affirm that God is a fact in his religious experience as truly as he may affirm a world of real things in the sphere of his sense-perceptions. Catherine Mumford, in one of her letters, says: "I always find it best to appeal to my consciousness. I know that the religion of Jesus is a reality just as I know I live and breathe and think, because my consciousness testifies it, my consciousness says, 'that was real.'"⁴

Mysticism, of course, does not ignore the intellect. The greatest mystics have uniformly been men and women of great intellectual ability. Neither does mysticism disparage the intellect as if it were a kind of second-rate function. But mysticism does not wholly depend upon the intellect

² *Studies in Mystical Religion*, Introduction, p. xv.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴ Harold Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, Vol. I, p. 173.

for the verification and authentication of religious reality. It uses the intellect to study the truth and the meaning of a reality already found, and to relate it properly to all the other elements in existence. But the reality itself, *that* is "given" to the consciousness directly, immediately. When one has had his mystical experience of God, one says with Job, "I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now, mine eye seeth thee."

The importance of all of this for the preacher begins to appear. No preaching is real preaching unless it is preaching with authority. The note of authority is of the very essence of preaching. And there can be no note of authority in preaching except there be in the soul of the preacher a great and overwhelming conviction of certainty. And there can be no absolute sense of certainty aside or apart from the preacher's own personal experience of God. In this sense we may affirm that at least a touch of mysticism is necessary not only to the vitality but to the existence of religious assurance; and that the degree of vitality, of assurance, of authority in a preacher will depend upon the depth and richness of his own mystical experience of God.

We touch here the central weakness of Christian preaching in our day. It does not issue from a profound, immediate experience of God which authenticates its reality in a fashion so indubitable that the preacher speaks from a sense of certainty and so with the note of spiritual authority. Let a preacher depend primarily upon other sources for the validity of the truth which he utters, and he speaks from a high degree of probability, from a conclusion which on the whole appears to be reasonable and worthy of acceptance. But when you hear a preacher say "I know" with emphasis and conviction, or when the people detect behind all that he says an unshaken sense of spiritual certainty, there you find a preacher who has had his own personal mystical experience of God, an experience in which the truth was "given" to him so directly as absolutely to authenticate its reality.

To-day as in other days, we have the "other" prophets and the true prophets. The "other" prophets base their prophesying on their study of books or of outward events, on the way other people have said it, or how it all looks to them. They sit at their windows and with their telescopes they spy out the land and they report to the people what they see. And many of the people, with telescopes just as good, have discovered things

for themselves. They say, Well, maybe the preacher is right, or he may be wrong. And the preacher himself has no absolute certainty and conviction that he *is* right. He is reporting the result of his study, or of his observation, of his own assessing of ideas, forces, or events. But occasionally one hears the voice of a true prophet in the land, of one who gives unmistakable evidence that he has had his own deep, immediate first-hand experience of God. And because he speaks out of that experience, he speaks with glorious certainty and he heralds to a bewildered and beleaguered people the glad tidings of deliverance and release. In the last instance it is the spirituality of the preacher, born of a mystical experience of God, which gives him any authority which he may be said to possess. Consciously or unconsciously people are listening to see whether or not they are hearing the voice of a true prophet; listening to see if the preacher really *knows* what he is talking about. If he does, they will be grateful. If he does not, it is really no good. The great preachers have always spoken out of their innermost experience of God. The New Testament preachers did. They spoke with assurance because they *knew* the reality of which they spoke. It is for such preaching that men wait to-day.

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If this in general is the need for mysticism in preaching, there are certain special conditions in our modern world which make it of imperative importance. First, the peculiar psychology of our time, and second, the social emergency.

Consider then some elements in the popular psychology which call for a preaching which presents spiritual truth with the clarity and certainty born of a personal and authentic experience of God. In the first place, then, we discover people all around us who have become burdened and wearied by the externality of existence. For multitudes of men life has become a huge workshop and the rattle of its machinery has appalled the soul. Its hectic speed, its hideous noise, its lack of rich inwardness, its clutter of things, its confusion of voices, have utterly wearied the mind, and the soul of man feels that it must escape from all this roar and turmoil and have quiet and solitude and be at peace. The discovery has been made that the irreligious life is an endless round of alternating strain and diversion. A mounting discontent has been felt in an age of the crowd, of mass movement and mass thinking, of purely conventional and superficial ways of "enjoying life." Multitudes of people have reached the point where the

strain and pressure of a purely secular existence has become intolerable. They were caught, as it were, in a net. The tyranny of things had reduced them to abject slavery. And for them the center of interest has shifted from the external to the internal. They began to look for an inward possession, for spiritual resources, for peace, for guidance, for light, for a Reality that would provide escape from the mountainous weight of outward and material interests, a pathway to the kingdom of God where are joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.⁵

What preaching answers to this undeniable demand and craving of the soul in our modern world? Not a bombastic, oratorical preaching. It adds to the general din, it in no sense relieves or refreshes the soul. Pulpit diatribes are an offense and an insult to a soul already overburdened by the ceaseless noisiness of our modern world. Not a secular preaching: a preaching which concerns itself mainly with outward events and treats these from a wholly peripheral point of view. Externality is the bane of much modern preaching. There is no hint of spiritual depths out of which resources may be gained wherewith to cope with the tragedies of life: no suggestion of escape from the turmoil of life into a Refuge for the soul where it may know itself to be safe and at peace. The preaching which answers to this aspect of modern life is a truly mystical preaching which issues out of a personal, immediate and authentic experience of God and speaks of a possible life of spiritual freedom and the spiritual possession of oneself. Whenever the voice of such a preacher is heard, one listens to it gratefully and knows that one has heard of that Reality which is the secret of peace. Other preaching may win crowds, may gain an outward popularity; but it makes no positive contribution to the spiritual health and to the spiritual sanity of our time. When I think of the kind of preaching for which men wait to-day, I recall some words which Phillips Brooks once wrote after he heard George MacDonald preach: "There were all the good and there were all the bad elements in the man's style: manly, rugged honesty and some tendency to sentimentality. But over and through it all there was this quality: it was a message from God to those people by him. The man struggled as a child struggles with his imperfectly mastered tongue that will not tell the errand as he received it and had it in his mind. As I listened, I seemed to feel how weak in contrast was the way

⁵ Acknowledgment is made to The Macmillan Company for permission to use this paragraph and a few subsequent passages from the author's essay on "Personal Religion" in *Religion Looks Ahead*.

in which other preachers had amused me or challenged my admiration by the working of their minds. But here was a real Gospel. Here were real tidings."⁶ Such spiritual proclamation, out of a soul which has found and known God and can communicate the mind of Christ to the people—that is mystical preaching which alleviates the strain, stills the noise of modern life, and ushers the listener into the secret place of the Most High.

Another feature of the religious psychology of our day is the secularization not of life, but of thought. A certain type of philosophic materialism has been at work robbing the universe of its spiritual garment and stripping humanity of its ideal elements. For years now many brilliant minds have been presenting a non-religious interpretation both of nature and of life. Personality, conscience, the human will in its free and independent action have been called figments of the imagination. All purposive action is a delusion and man is no more capable of creative activity than the lowest animal or the crystal in the test tube. He responds as infallibly as either to external force or stimulus. He has no more reason for believing in any destiny than has the merest insect that crawls from one annihilation to another. He is a "bit of scum that coats for the time being the insignificant fragment of a cast-off star that we call the earth."⁷ In due process of time this scum will evaporate while the stars continue to revolve as imperturbably as ever. In the faculties of most of our colleges to-day may be found brilliant young teachers who have caught the ear of eager intelligent youth, and are aggressive in their work of undoing all of the traditional religious teaching which their students have received at home or at church. Thus a professor in one of our New England colleges devoted some lectures in the term following Easter to prove that belief in immortality is not only unmoral but immoral. And these ideas have filtered down from the specialists and scholars and from academic circles into the popular mind. They have been translated into the common vernacular. They have filled the pages of popular books and magazines and have become the common property of the common people. Thus it happens that the preacher can advance no single spiritual proposition no matter how elementary it may be, without having it consciously or unconsciously challenged or denied by those to whom he is speaking. He can assume nothing. The reality of the soul, the spiritual constitution of man,

⁶*Lectures on Preaching*, E. P. Dutton and Co., p. 16.

⁷ Harlow Shepley art, "The Origin of the Earth," *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, February 7, 1924.

duty, goodness, to say nothing of the personality of God and the distinctively Christian dogmas—these are all matters of debate, and are not by any means to be taken for granted.

How now is the preacher in our modern world to deal with such a situation, radically different from that in which our fathers preached and prophesied? To my thinking there is only one ultimate way to meet such a condition in popular thought and background. It is not the way of argumentation or intellectual demonstration. It is not by rehearsing the philosophical reasons with which we have become familiar for believing in a spiritual universe and in a personal God. That is not to say that the modern preacher must not himself be thoroughly grounded in his philosophical idealism and in his Christian theism. He must be. Moreover, he must show in his preaching that he is thoroughly familiar with all forms of modern materialistic thinking and that he has traversed the whole field of modern scientific controversy. He has not accepted the traditional belief as a matter of mere inheritance. He does not rest his faith on the mere fiat of Scripture. He does not rehearse well-worn Bible texts as the ultimate foundation of his thinking. By his every accent, allusion, in the framework and fabric of his thought it is evident to his listeners that he is a trained man, trained in modern ways of thinking, acquainted with every phase of the modern interpretation of life. But he is not a public debater. The difficulty with this method of approach is, that it inevitably arouses the combative instinct in his listeners. "That may be true, but on the other hand." "Well, you may have it there, but what about this?" At best that kind of preaching may leave hearers with the conviction that it is at most a drawn battle. Just as a man who had gone to court and had listened to two brilliant lawyers argue a case on opposite sides came away saying: "Bless my soul, they are both right." Not so is victory to be won for the great Christian verities, the great Christian interpretation of the world and of human destiny. I am persuaded that this victory, this final verdict is to be won only as the preacher by his preaching presents a spiritual Reality so authentic, so indubitable that it arouses not the spirit of combat, but the spirit of awe and of reverence. The one final and indubitable Reality the truth of which is undeniable, which flashes its radiance and its beauty with convincing power before the minds of men, is a soul which witnesses both by what it says and by what it is to the Truth that behind this rude and temporary framework that we call the universe is That which if a man

knows, he becomes himself a new man freed from every inward inhibition, and from every outward circumstance—becomes himself a godlike human soul. In a word, it is the preacher who himself presents, alike by what he undeniably is, and by what undeniably he has discovered and experienced, who thus presents the real thing, who can meet this situation in our modern world. Men will go away saying, There is a man who knows what he is talking about. Behind what he has tried to say, there is the man that he undeniably is; and behind what he is, there is the Reality which has made him what in our heart of hearts we all know we ought to be, or ought to want to be. It is only as the preacher himself has been touched by, has been interpenetrated by an immediate, authoritative, authentic experience of God that he can speak with commanding conviction to the minds of men that have been bewildered by a non-religious interpretation of human existence.

Proof of this abounds. Consider, for example, the undeniable turn toward mysticism among the intellectually trained students in our colleges. It is not too much to say that wearied by the dogmatism of modern materialism, impatient of its claims whether in the field of reason or of morals, disillusioned by its teaching, and reacting to the extremes to which it leads, they are listening with increased sympathy to that teaching, whether it be found in Buchmanism, in Barthianism, or in Catholicism, whether Roman or Anglo-Catholic, which presents a spiritual foundation for the hopes and fears of humanity. Read what Thomas L. Harris has to say in his "Religion for a Scanty Band," in *Harpers' Magazine* (August, 1933). I myself have witnessed what might seem to be a strange and even unaccountable spectacle. I have seen a room full of college-trained youth listening with profound attention to Father Hoffman of the Cowley Fathers, in ecclesiastical garb, as he spoke of Religion as the Supreme Reality. His ecclesiastical ideas they might deny. His theological convictions might be pole-wide from their own. But undeniably there was the simple and transparent sincerity of one who spoke out of his own authentic experience of God, and not a young man or woman in the room but was visibly impressed. They crowded around him afterwards. They begged him to come again. They felt that they were up against the real thing. Could any argumenter, debater or intellectual apologist have won those youth as he did? I doubt it. And what goes for youth, goes for age. It is only as Protestant preaching can exhibit Religious Reality born out of

an intense and authentic experience of God that it can do the work which needs to be done in the intellectual ferment of our modern world.

One more element in the popular psychology of our time which only a mystical preaching can meet, remains to be mentioned. It is the discovery of the close relation of mind and body, and of the interaction of the one upon the other. The pace of life in our modern world has proved too much not only for the peace but for the health of men. Modern invention has placed more equipment at our service than we are able to handle. The nervous system has been overtaxed in the effort to utilize all of this apparatus. Convenient means of transportation carry us so easily that people are on the move all the time. When they are not moving, equally convenient means of communication pour a constant volume of talk and music into their ears. The motion picture makes an enormous demand on the emotions. The complexity of modern economic and social conditions has bewildered and baffled many others who cannot find their way through the network of "complexes" which encompass them. The result of all of this has been a weakening of nervous resistance and stability. There has been a large increase of every form of disease which has its roots in a disordered nervous organization. Hence neurology has become one of the most prominent departments of modern medical science. Psychiatry has developed a technique of its own to deal with these disordered personalities. And the cure for every form of such malady, it has been seen, lies in a reorganized and freshly fortified personality. A new ego is what is needed. The case calls for a reconstruction of the personal life. The submerged and subconscious self, if roused to life and action, will throw over the habits, whether of mind or body, which enslave one, and usher him into a new life of freedom and of joy.

Such is the pathological situation which confronts us, which has grown yearly in its dimensions, which has created an entirely new department of medical science, and has called into being all kinds of extra-ecclesiastical cults, menti-culture in its various forms, which count their devotees by the hundreds of thousands, who have drifted outside the pale of orthodoxy in their quest of interior peace and power.

What now is the kind of preaching which suits such a situation as this, which can make a positive contribution to the health and sanity of men? Evidently it is that kind of preaching which, because it is born out of the spirit of God, can come to the aid of the beleaguered soul of man. It is only

life that can beget life. There is no balm in Gilead that can cure the wounded soul. But the transmission of spiritual power through a human medium that is vibrant with its own possession of it, can work miracles on body and soul alike to-day as truly as two thousand years ago. "The generation in which we live," Professor Kirsopp Lake has written, "is one which responds less and less to diatribes of the pulpit, but it is also a generation which is spiritually more delicate than its predecessors, and looks for a church which will help it back into spiritual health, and will give individual attention to individual souls, recognizing the infinite variety of religious experience, both healthy and diseased, of which the individual soul is capable."⁸ The longing for the word of authority, the word of command, the word of comfort and release from the lips of God's minister is a longing which ought not to be ignored and which ought not to be denied.

But it is a word which can be spoken only by that minister of God who has for his inmost possession the Life and the Spirit of the Living God. We see Jesus moving in and out of the disordered multitudes of men, possessed then as to-day by devils which must be exorcised if men are to be sane and whole, and speaking the word of command whereby the evil spirits left them. Body and mind alike were healed by that authoritative voice behind which was the strength of the Infinite God. The same multitudes to-day are waiting for such healing. And too often they are waiting in vain. But when a man of God to-day is possessed by the Spirit of God, he too can walk out among the infirm multitudes and speak in a voice that can so summon the innate spiritual forces to life and to action that men, like the lame man before the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, will walk and leap and praise God for the salvation which has come to them.

Such, then, are the elements in personal psychology which insistently call for a preaching which issues out of an inward and mystical experience of God. But beyond this there appears what I have called the social emergency which demands equally the preaching of the mystic. Only mystical preachers, in the sense in which I have tried to define the term, will be found equal to the tremendous social demands of the day in which we live.

⁸*The Stewardship of Faith*, pp. 143, 144.

To demonstrate the truth of this, I turn to the prophet Jeremiah. In the first chapter of the book which bears his name, we have the record of his call to be a prophet to the world in which he lives. But what a world it is! Corrupt rulers misgovern the people. The people themselves are sunk deep in lethargy, immorality and religious indifference. Ringed around Israel are threatening nations, and the whole world boils as a caldron with hatred and vindictiveness. There is no escape anywhere apparent from inevitable ruin and catastrophe. No wonder that Jeremiah recoils at such a time from assuming the rôle of a prophet and preacher of religion. Alas! he says, I am but a little child—which does not mean that he is too young in years, but that he is too sensitive, too delicate. The ideals of which he is to be the advocate are too refined and tenuous. How can he hope to make them prevail? How can he expect to be heard or to exercise any influence or authority in a Jerusalem that is deaf and callous to any spiritual appeal? Then follows the record of his experience of God. It is a deeply mystical experience. It is described in deeply mystical language. All that can be said is, that the Word of God suddenly, irresistibly, overpoweringly took possession of him, and utterly controlled him, entered into his bones. It became bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. It was the Word made flesh. He had an experience of God so exquisite, so delicate, so authentic that he himself became a vibrant and responsive instrument of the Will of God. And he was told to go out and stand before Jehoiakim, before the sodden and cynical populace, before the implacable enemies of Israel, and not to be afraid of their faces. "For I have put my words in thy mouth. See, I have set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to root out and pull down, and to destroy and to throw down and to build and to plant." Only a mystic could act so tremendous a rôle. But Jeremiah, in the strength of the profound and controlling experience of God which had come to him, went out, single-handed and alone, into that tumultuous world and took command of it. He became the most authoritative influence in that ancient world. No king, no potentate, no man or set of men exercised the influence of this apparently helpless man who for his sole equipment possessed the Spirit of the Living God. No other power could have been equal to that social emergency. But Jeremiah's mystical experience of God in the darkest period of Hebrew history saved the soul of Israel and preserved its ideals for the salvation of the world.

I think of the minister facing his task in our modern world. How

many, how serious, how sinister are the problems that confront him! All around is an intellectual ferment, a deepseated skepticism and uncertainty with respect to the very foundations of religion and morality. There is this widespread lawlessness, of such dimensions as to amount to a revolt against constituted authority: a situation so ominous as to give our leaders the gravest concern. Our social life is disturbed by sinister racial antagonisms so deep and threatening that disorders keep breaking out, and hatred and suspicion abound. The very foundations of our whole economic structure have been shaking and men have become alarmed. The international situation is full of active disintegrating forces and the world instead of becoming established in peace is full of antagonisms which threaten the existence of our civilization. The last ten years have been called the most important years in the moral life of mankind. Old things are passing away. Behold, all things are becoming new.

In such a world, at such a time, stands the preacher called to be the mouthpiece of the oracles of God, of the spirit of Jesus. No wonder if he draws back. No wonder if he says: Ah! Lord, I am but a little child. How can I prophesy in such a world? What power or control can I, weak as I feel myself to be, possess or exercise in such a world as this? How infinitely more difficult preaching in our present world is from the world in which our fathers preached! I think back to my great-grandfather, for forty-five years pastor of a Presbyterian church in Antrim, New Hampshire. How simple his task seems to be in comparison with that which confronts his great-grandson to-day! The world was fairly simple then, and men lived simple lives. The great intellectual and economic and political problems of our modern world had not begun to disclose themselves. In those days people were wrapped up religiously in the problems of their personal lives. And the preaching was concerned exclusively with these inward experiences. It had no application to the social or political matters. But to-day, the truth which the preacher utters, if it is to have authority and significance, must concern itself in a real and positive sense with the great ominous, threatening issues of the world in which the preacher lives.

Of course, there is a way out of this. The preacher may say, I cannot cope with these great issues. They lie beyond my power to order or to control. I can neither aspire nor expect to say or do anything which will in any way order or control the great world movements of the outside world. All that I can hope to do is to warn the sinner and comfort the

saint. Thus one may be a "successful" parish minister and have what is called a "successful" parish year. One may get along comfortably in his work. And yet! how can a prophet of God be satisfied? Thus he ceases to be a moral factor in this changing world, and the church ceases to have commanding authority. Is not this the way of cowardice and so the way of failure? Does not this rob the church of its dignity and authority as the very voice of God? Not so did Jeremiah view his mission, nor the apostles of the Evangel of Jesus. Not so must the preacher view his task in the world in which we live.

Rather he must face it. His soul must be troubled. He cannot escape from the terrible duty that confronts him into the snug confines of his parish. He must stand in the midst of the portentous and crashing events of the world. And standing there, heard or unheard, heeded or unheeded, he must utter the Truth that has within it the dynamic and the power to shape the destinies of the world and bring it into harmony with the Will of God.

But what equips him for such a task? What enables him to speak with a commanding and prophetic voice? What clothes him with authority and gives him this power of influence and control? Nothing, evidently, but that which made the prophet Jeremiah what he was in his day: nothing else, nothing less, but this deep, inward and mystical experience of God which burns like a fire in his bones and makes him a selfless instrument of the Word and Will of God.

How different the impact of one who possesses this experience from that of him who does not possess it, upon the life of his time. These "other" prophets in our modern world approach the social emergency from without. They discuss, argue, rationalize from the viewpoint of a purely secular wisdom and judgment. But when one is once in the grip of this divine intuition, this immediate experience of God, then one speaks with authority and not as the scribes. Then one brings the very Will of God and the Mind of Christ to bear upon external events, and judges them from the high vantage ground of the Divine Will which operates far above the scheming and the planning of lesser, finite minds.

It is this religious interpretation of history for which we wait. It is this high, commanding voice for which we listen. Only a mystical experience of God equips his prophets for the present social emergency. This only will inform their message with a real spiritual significance. This

only will make preachers fearless men, uttering their message far above the debates of the political forum and market place, never stooping to compromise, and never equivocating or accommodating their utterance from prudential motives to what seem immediate and attainable ends. This only will give the modern prophet clarity of insight, directing men's minds through the bewilderment and turmoil of uncertainty and indecision to the great divine goals of human endeavor, to the pathways which lead to the kingdom of heaven.

Never was there a day when preaching could mean more than it can mean to-day. But preaching to-day can acquire its significance and exercise its influence and control only as the preachers themselves have a deep experience of God and thus a sure knowledge of his Will for his world.

Thus from every point of view the preacher's greatest need to-day is for a deeper mystical experience of God. It is only to put the thing another way to say that our greatest need is to discover afresh the deepest, innermost fact of Christianity itself. What is the thing itself, the "Ding an sich," the innermost essence of Christianity? It is Christ himself. It is that in Christ the Word and Will of the Infinite God were once for all revealed. It is that the Life of God in Christ can make over the life of every individual and judge the nations; sweep away, uproot, destroy every man-made system that defies it; and build and plant upon the world governments and systems which incarnate the Spirit, the Life, the Love of God. Thus to apprehend and to apply the mind of God in Christ to every issue, every problem that confronts the intelligence and conscience of men to-day, is to recover for the church its august and unshakable authority, derived solely from the fact that it knows and is possessed by and dares to utter the very Mind of God manifested in the Soul of Christ himself.

In a sermon preached (at Crouch Hill Presbyterian Church, London, on May 3, 1931) by the late Dean of Canterbury, H. R. L. Sheppard, are to be found these words. "[If] the churches have lost the hearts of the people, [it is] not because they have preached Christ and he has been unacceptable, but because they have preached something less than the unedited Gospel of our Lord, something much too small, and let me add at the same time, something much too complicated and elaborate, which, in consequence, has become peculiarly unattractive to those who believe, as

indeed I do, that the beginning and the end of Christianity is simply this: the simple following of Jesus Christ in incorruptibleness of living."

Thus there is but one question confronting the church as it faces its future, its place and meaning in our modern world. That question confronts clergy and laity alike. And the question is, Do we know Christ? Oh! we know a lot. We know psychology and science and literature and history. But that still leaves the question unanswered, Do we know Christ himself? Have we let Christ make such an impression on us that we are sure that in him and through him we have heard the Voice of God, and so know what God is like? And when we have thus known Christ, are we prepared to preach him and live him and carry him into every relationship of life? To know Christ in such a sense is mystical religion at its truest, its highest and its best. That was the heart of the mysticism of Saint John and of Saint Paul, of Saint Francis and of Saint Catherine and of every other saint in and out of Scripture who wrought righteousness, subdued kingdoms and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Mysticism is simply spiritual religion, Christian experience in its directest and intensest form. And that is our greatest need.

Such an experience may be ours if we covet it, and with all our souls seek to possess it. The trouble with our modern ministry is that so many are content to operate without it. These men deal largely with externals; they are organizers, manipulators, managers. They are devoted, and, within the sphere of their operations, successful men. But they make no permanent contribution to the solution of the tragic problems in the personal or in the social life of our modern world. We need to spend much more time on our knees. We need to know as we never have known the Will of God and the Mind of Christ. We need above all else a deep controlling experience of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Oh, let us not deceive ourselves. All is not well with the world. All is not well with the church. All is not well with ourselves. These are hard, ominous days. The whole world lies in open, in pitiful need. From everywhere there comes the cry for a new Spirit. The only hope is in a new vision of him and a new understanding, such as only Love can bring, of his mind and heart. We must discover Christ afresh. That discovery of Christ himself is the source and center of Christian mysticism, and such spiritual discovery is the deepest need of preaching that shall do its best and highest work in our modern world.

Christianity and Nationalism

ERNEST FREMONT TITTLE

NATIONALISM has become a religion. In the case of millions of people it appears to be the only religion that seems to have any vitality, any power to inspire and to command. Consider, for example, the feeling of many Italians for Mussolini. One of them has written, "If we call Mussolini our god, we express the mood of untold numbers, especially the young. For them he is a god of a great faith with martyrs and heroes, which is the only oasis in a world plunged in materialism." Consider also the worship (the word is none too strong) which appears to be accorded to Hitler by thousands of adoring Germans. Last summer, in Berlin, Stanley High had his attention called to a portrait of Hitler displayed in the show window of a large art shop on Unter-den-Linden. Surrounding this portrait were copies of a painting now popular in Germany, a painting of Christ; and the German, himself a non-Nazi, who called Mr. High's attention to this display remarked, "We seem to see a striking resemblance in the features of the two men." Both in Italy and in Germany nationalism is something more than a political or an economic movement; it has become a religion. Its symbols, its rituals, its anthems, its mass celebrations, its worship of the founder, its power to stir the emotions, to evoke feelings of reverence and awe—all are unmistakable characteristics of religion.

In Hungary, also, in Czecho-Slovakia and in Turkey; in fact, in nearly every country in Europe one finds the same or similar phenomena. More potent than Mohammedanism, than Roman or Greek Catholicism, than Lutheranism or any form of Protestantism, is this developing religion of nationalism.

Nor is the situation otherwise in Asia. In Japan, Shintoism is not only the national religion, it is to-day, as it has always been, the religion of nationalism, a religion which worships the emperor as the visible, personal embodiment of the state. In India, Gandhi's popularity appears to be waning, for the reason that he has now become the voice not only of India's passionate longing for political independence but also of her crying need to emancipate the many millions of her own untouchables. But as the popu-

lar voice of her nationalistic dream and desire he once had a following such as no living man has ever had.

And observe also what is happening in the United States of America. We are avowedly a Christian nation, yet in the eyes of many of our people the national flag is more sacred than the cross. It stirs them emotionally as the cross does not. As yet no American has advocated the substitution of early American history and folk lore for the Old Testament. Yet it can hardly be denied that not a few Americans feel for the Constitution a reverence which they do not feel for the Sermon on the Mount. There is reason to believe that in the early days of our republic a decision of the Supreme Court such as that which was handed down in the case of Professor Macintosh would have been met with a storm of protest, for *in effect* what that decision says is that no one should or shall be granted citizenship in the United States who considers that his supreme allegiance is due to the will of God: in order to be admitted to citizenship in the United States one must consider that his supreme allegiance is due to the will of Congress. Yet when that decision, by a bare majority vote—five to four—was handed down by our Supreme Court, although several religious bodies did venture to take issue with it, nothing happened which could possibly be described as a storm of protest. As in Europe and in Asia, so also in this country, nationalism is becoming a religion. For many of our people the state is now the supreme object of devotion. Its expressed will is considered to be more binding than any other obligation.

Now, it is easy to quarrel with this religion of nationalism, but first let us try to understand it. Let us try to look at it from the inside, through the eyes of the man to whom it *is* a religion and to whom it appears to be a very satisfying and empowering religion. Only in case we do understand it and see what is good in it as well as what is bad in it shall we be able successfully to overcome it.

In every nation where nationalism has become a religion there are, no doubt, special reasons for its appearance, reasons which are peculiar to that nation. Undoubtedly, one reason for the rise of Chinese nationalism is the brutal treatment which, once and again, China has received from other powers. Just as undoubtedly, one reason for Hitlerism is the hopelessness which came over Germany as the result of attempts to enforce the Treaty of Versailles. Starved into surrender in 1918; held solely responsible for the awful guilt of the war; stripped of her colonies and of many of her

European possessions; disarmed with the understanding that her disarmament would be the first step in the direction of a general European disarmament; reduced to physical impotence and economic servitude; laden with reparations and indemnities which not even her children's children could hope to pay; subjected after the war to a seven months' blockade during which women and children, already undernourished, suffered horribly from malnutrition; subjected to the humiliation and awful risk of a military occupancy of her coal fields by one of her recent enemies; the victim of a frantic period of monetary inflation during which her middle class lost all their savings; suffering ever since the war from unemployment and, during the depression, as no other nation has suffered, Germany at last in desperation accepted Hitler! That, to be sure, is not the whole story, nor does it in any way condone Germany's present treatment of Jews and other minorities; but it is, I think, a part of the story which ought now to be recalled and must be if the rest of the world is to deal intelligently with the German situation.

In every country where nationalism has become a flaming religion there are, as I say, special reasons for its appearance; but, considering the fact that nationalism is now almost a world-wide phenomenon, one feels constrained to ask, Are there not some causes of it which are more or less generally operative?

One of them, I believe, is an inevitable reaction from an excessive, preposterous and apparently futile individualism. To some of us it may seem incredible that young men should be willing to surrender all their liberties and place themselves unreservedly in the hands of a dictator. Yet Mussolini has declared, and the youth of Italy have applauded his declaration, that liberty is dead, men no longer want it, they are weary of it, sick of it; what they now want is discipline and intelligent control. Such appears to be the case, not only in Italy, but also in Russia, in Germany, and, in lesser degree, in many another country. Astonishing? Yes, until you begin to reflect upon the fact that liberty is not, properly, an end in itself. After you have given men liberty they have still to ask, What are we to do with it? And if, perchance, they do not know what to do with it; if they find themselves free but have no answer to the question, Free for what?; if there seems to be nothing worth while to which they may freely devote themselves; if they do not appear to be getting anywhere with their freedom, except into trouble, they may become weary of liberty

and be glad of a chance to exchange it for disciplined devotion to some inspiring leader of whom it may at least be said that he is setting before them a summons and an opportunity to do something with their lives, something that appears to be "great and glorious."

It may, then, be the case that the pendulum is swinging from a nineteenth century individualism to a twentieth century fascism, partly because increasing numbers of men have grown weary of a freedom which did not issue in devotion to any great end but only in confusion and corruption and the wretched feeling that their own lives were meaningless and vain.

There is, however, another reason for the development of a flaming nationalism which seems to me to be even more profound. We are living at a time when faith in God has become terribly shaken. Our fathers lived all their lives under the influence and sustaining power of a common world view. To be sure, on some points there were lively differences of opinion, as, for example, the nature and inspiration of the Bible and the proper mode of administering the rite of baptism. But there was an almost universal belief in God and immortality, in the meaning, significance, and continuation of life: whereas to-day even as regards God and immortality there is no universal agreement; even as regards the meaning of life, whether life has any meaning or significance or goal, there is no common conviction. At a time when the need of co-operation is probably far greater than it has ever been in the past there is no common world view under whose influence and sustaining power men may co-operate. That undoubtedly is one of the greatest spiritual tragedies of our time.

Yet man is incurably religious, at least in the sense that he needs and desires an object of worship. He must have some object of worship. And now that in millions of cases he is becoming unsure of God, perhaps it is not to be wondered at that he should worship the state, ascribing to it a more-than-human quality, a superhuman glory, personifying it, and apostrophizing it in some such words as Lowell used in his Harvard Commemoration Ode:

O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!

What were our lives without thee?

What all our lives to save thee?

We reck not what we gave thee;

We will not dare to doubt thee,

But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

Personally, I have no doubt that nationalism is a reaction against an excessive individualism and that responsible for it also is a growing lack of certainty as regards the reality and power of God. Yet when all is said that needs to be said in the way of sympathetic interpretation, the fact remains that nationalism as a flaming religion is now one of the chief reasons why "the thought of war and the possibility of war are ever present, hanging over the nations as a constant menace."

There are many reasons why nationalism makes for war. Devotion to the state may give a man a sense of significance, which in my view is all to the good; but it may do so regardless of the intellectual and moral quality of his own life—a fact which is not so good. A perfervid devotion to the state may produce men with inflated egos who, in actual fact, have little if any reason to feel proud of themselves but who, nevertheless, do feel immensely proud, for are not they citizens of the greatest country on the face of the earth?

Furthermore, in the creed of nationalism it is not written that the state should be unselfish or even just in its dealings with other states. What is written is that the state should feel perfectly free to do anything it may deem necessary to do in order to promote its own prosperity, power, and prestige. From which it follows that devotion to the state does not require the individual to be unselfish or even just in all his relationships to all men everywhere. It does not require him to have any regard for the welfare of men, women and children across the frontier. It merely requires him to have some regard for the welfare of his own people. Theoretically it does require him to do that. But, as Theodore Roosevelt used to say, "Any man who will steal *for* me will steal *from* me." And it also appears to be true that any man who will take advantage of another people will, on occasion, take advantage of his own people. It is hard to be honest only in spots! Hence the present spectacle of certain Americans, engaged in international trade, who have always professed a perfervid patriotism and who, as investigation is now bringing out, have persistently attempted in one way or another, one *shady* way or another, to avoid the payment of an income tax. Not only have they felt morally free, in their own interest or supposed interest, to bolster up in Cuba a government so rotten, so corrupt and cruel, that it became for the Cuban people intolerable; they have, apparently, also felt morally free to cheat and defraud their own government.

An exclusive devotion to the state does not, apparently, make impossible an inflated egoism that is bound to be irritating to other peoples. Nor does it, apparently, make impossible a cold and calculating selfishness which not only abroad but also at home is bound to imperil the whole structure of human society.

And note also another matter of paramount importance. The creed of nationalism assumes that we are living in a world in which a nation can afford to be a law unto itself, inasmuch as it is self-sufficient, self-sustaining; whereas fact after fact is now rising up to say that such a world, if it ever was, now is no more. Beyond dispute we are now living in a world where no nation is or can be self-sufficient. In plain view of a World War, is it not just a little absurd to talk about political isolation? In plain view of a world-wide depression, is it not more than a little absurd to talk about economic insulation? And when it comes to culture, is not belief in national sufficiency plain crazy? When certain young Nazis, in a literally consuming enthusiasm for their own culture, gathered together and burned the literary productions of other cultures, not only did they violate the very soul of true culture, they violated and impoverished their own souls. Literature and music, science and art—all great cultural values—are international, as one would have supposed anybody outside a madhouse would be able to see. Nationalism is out of touch with reality, out of step with the age. In the world we now have it is as truly an anachronism as an ox-cart, a spinning wheel, a Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's court. It is now too late to worship a tribal god. Under modern conditions you simply cannot worship a tribal god without courting disaster.

One of the best defenses of economic nationalism that I have seen has come from the pen of Dean Donham of the Graduate School of Business Administration of Harvard University. He contends that we of the United States cannot hope to control international troubles of an economic character; we can only hope to insulate ourselves against them. But is not that statement at both ends prematurely dogmatic? Is it already perfectly clear that we cannot, in association with other nations, hope to control international troubles of an economic character? Is it already perfectly clear that we *could* insulate ourselves against them? The distinguished dean also contends that it is far more important for us to recover the huge volume of trade which we have lost in the home market than it is to recover the relatively small volume of trade which we have lost in the foreign

market: and, he says, we cannot do both. But is it true that we cannot do both? By no means every economist is prepared to say that it is; and many persons who must be conceded to possess a good deal of economic intelligence *are* prepared to say that if we attempt to secure our own economic recovery in disregard of the world's recovery, we shall certainly imperil those friendly relations which are all-essential to international peace and, therefore, to the prosperity of any and every country; and we may provoke economic reprisals which will lead us and the world as well into another war.

Nationalism is dividing men in a world where they desperately need to be united. It is setting men against one another at a time when they greatly need to co-operate with one another in some intelligent attempt to create a decent and enduring civilization. It is filling the world with fear and so making impossible any substantial reduction of armaments—those huge and expensive armaments which no people to-day can afford to pay for, and which, far from providing a sense of security, are causing everybody to feel horribly insecure; far from insuring against war are again creating, as they did in 1914, a psychological situation in which war appears probable and even imminent.

Furthermore, within the nation itself nationalism is running amuck. It is stamping out minorities. It is becoming intolerant of criticism, of difference. It is making difference an affront and criticism a crime. It is forcibly attempting to make the nation a unit in order to make it a power. To what end? Its own aggrandizement!

Nationalism means egoism. It means selfishness. It means ruthlessness. It means the stamping out of minorities. It means barriers artificially constructed and forcibly maintained. It means tariff walls. It means armaments. It means war.

And now for a text, a great text at any time, an indispensable text for our time. "The devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." How very familiar that sounds! The voice of imperialism. The ancient, modern, and always mad dream of empire, to be secured by force and upheld by the sword. The spirit of nationalism recognizing no law beyond or above the state. "The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them—all these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and wor-

ship me," says the spirit of nationalism. To which Jesus replied, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

That, I say, is an indispensable text for our time. We must have an object of devotion. Our lives appear meaningless, they appear empty and vain, until we do discover some object of devotion—something greater than self to which we may enthusiastically commit ourselves. And we may have not one only but many objects of devotion. We may quite properly be devoted to our family, our firm, our profession, our church, our university, our country. Yet no single one of these is sufficiently inclusive to permit of its becoming the supreme object of human devotion. Mazzini was probably right in assuming that the family and the nation are two ultimate and permanent forms of human organization. I myself believe that man will never outgrow his need either of the family or of the nation. I am not an internationalist in the sense of believing that the nation may be done away. Yet the fact remains (and will ever remain) that neither the family nor the nation may safely be made the supreme object of human devotion. Anyone who allows himself to make his own family the supreme object of his devotion is bound to be selfish, and just to the extent that he is selfish he is bound to hurt not only other people's families but his own. Anyone who allows his own country to become the supreme object of his devotion is bound to plan and act in disregard of the welfare of other countries, and to whatever extent he does so plan and act he is bound to hurt not only the people of some other country but also the people of his own country.

It is written that the supreme object of human devotion shall be "God and him only." In the very nature of things it is so written, for God alone is inclusive of all human values, all human interests and obligations. In the service of God and him only are all other devotions gathered up and made secure. Supremely devoted to God, a man may be greatly devoted to his own family and his own country. As a matter of fact, men who were supremely devoted to God have always been good husbands, good fathers, true patriots. Such men have not by their selfishness and ruthlessness outside the home set a bad example for their own children or in any way cursed the lives of their children. Nor have they by their dealings with other nations imperiled the prosperity and peace of their own nation. It is written, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God and him only

shalt thou serve," because in the service of God one is able greatly to serve every human need and obligation.

Nationalism is now a menace to everything that makes life dear and sweet under the sun. Nationalism must be overcome if civilization is to endure. But nationalism is now a religion, and, as history shows, there is only one way to overcome a religion, namely, to confront it with a superior religion. You cannot stamp out a religion with force. Religion thrives on persecution. The only way to overcome a religion is to confront it with a superior religion. *Is there any superior religion which may hope to overcome the religion of nationalism?* Yes, there is Christianity, with a vision that is world-embracing, a concern for human life that transcends all man-made barriers of race, nation and class, and an ancient power to stir the human heart, to engender in men a devotion that knows no limit but is willing to risk and endure even the cross.

Christianity could hope to overcome the religion of nationalism and so secure a new birth of prosperity and peace for the world. But not the kind of Christianity which we commonly have to-day. What does present-day Christianity have to offset the disciplined devotion of Soviet Russia, fascist Italy, or Nazi Germany? In devotion to the state men are ready to surrender their freedom and place themselves unreservedly in the hands of a dictator. They are ready to risk their fortunes. They are ready to give up their lives. How much are present-day Christians ready to surrender or risk in devotion to God and his kingdom? Is it not almost a notorious fact that to-day the profession of Christianity does not seem to impose on a man any unusual kind of discipline? Or to require of him any sacrifice? Or to involve him in any risk? He is expected to be respectable. He is not expected to be in any way heroic.

It is, therefore, impossible for present-day Christianity to put out the hot and destructive fires of nationalism and secure the peace of the world: it is far too tepid, too timid, to do that. But what about a bold, heroic, apostolic kind of Christianity, comparable to that which in the early Christians met unarmed and finally overcame the power of imperial Rome? Let Christians the world around refuse to fight and destroy one another. Let them solemnly declare to their respective governments that they will refuse to fight and destroy one another, they will go to prison first, they will die first. Let them form a Christian international for the purpose of encouraging and supporting one another in their several attempts to save

their own country and the world from an appalling catastrophe. Let them demand disarmament, universal disarmament, total disarmament, within a given period, say five years. Let them demand an immediate withdrawal of the manufacture of arms from private concerns. It is monstrous that men should be allowed to make money out of the misery and death of their fellows. It is monstrous that they should be in a position to do what, according to the report of a League of Nations commission, private manufacturers of arms have done: They have attempted to control public opinion by manipulating the press. They have attempted to bribe government officials. They have deliberately fomented war scares. They have put into circulation false and provocative information concerning the military and naval plans of other powers. Let Christians the world around demand an immediate end to the private manufacture of arms. Let them demand the cessation of every kind of economic warfare. Let them insist upon an end to selfish, ruthless competition, whether between individuals or between nations. Let them begin to fashion and perfect such instruments of peace as a world court, an international labor bureau, an international economic council. Above all, let them undertake to build a society that will make for peace, a society based upon intelligent planning and unselfish co-operation for the common good.

Is not this asking a good deal? Of course it is. But is it asking too much? Is it asking anything more of Christians than the religion of nationalism asks of its adherents? Is it asking for anything more in devotion to the kingdom of God than the religion of nationalism asks and expects in devotion to the state? Even though it should involve the giving up of life, as in some countries it doubtless would do, it would be asking no more than the religion of nationalism asks and expects of its followers. And it might be effective. It might be redemptive. It might mean the end of war and a new birth of prosperity and peace for the world. A bold, heroic, apostolic kind of Christianity might save the day. Is there anything else that will or can?

The Dilemma of Religion in the Economic Order

CLARENCE TUCKER CRAIG

“THE Dilemma of Religion in the Economic Order” presses home upon all of us with increased intensity. No apologies are necessary, therefore, for one to deal with it who is a student of the New Testament rather than an expert economist. Indeed, I am convinced that much of the fumbling indecision of the church to-day arises not from the fact that we are amateurs in economic questions, but from our uncertainty as to the function of religion in the social order.

The breakdown in our economic processes leaves our institutions more flexible than at any time in the memory of living man. Features of a surviving individualism mingle with an unadjusted collectivism as the official mechanicians strive to get both production and consumption back into high gear. No one knows how much of their work will survive, but nothing can turn back the hand of the clock and thwart marked changes in our economic life. Yet we have no assurance that the net result will be a more Christian social order. A Christian social order is not necessarily one that will produce the maximum of wealth. Whether the Christian church can have any real influence upon the result may be open to question. There can be no doubt, however, that organized religion itself has a great deal at stake. Every change in the economic order has an effect upon religion, whether religion has any reciprocal influence or not. The far-reaching changes in Russia are a matter of history. We are witnessing under our very eyes how such a different overturning of institutions in Germany cannot leave religion unaffected. Even though our revolution should be much less drastic, it cannot help but profoundly affect institutional expressions of religion.

If we are to understand the present situation, we need a certain amount of historical perspective. Our present dilemma is set for us by certain facts accompanying the rise of Christianity on the one hand, and of capitalism on the other. The perplexity of the Christian arises from the fact that two

inheritances are warring in his members, but he sees no deliverance from the body of this death.

Christianity did not begin with an attempt to transform social institutions by religious idealism. An historical reading of the teaching of Jesus places that beyond question. He sought to lead individuals to live according to new ideals in preparation for the coming of the new age which God would send. So radical and inward was his call to repentance that it was in essence a call to perfection. Though the appeal of Jesus was individual and spiritual it led inevitably to the question of material possessions. Mammon was the chief competitor of God; riches were the biggest handicap in entering into the new age which God was about to send. Private property as such was not opposed; Jesus strictly refused the rôle of a divider of goods. Since it was God's poor who should be blessed in the new age, he sought more wealth for no one. It is noteworthy how he described the prudent capitalist who systematically built up his fortune. Of course it was not, "Thou pillar of society!" Neither was it, "Thou robber!" Rather it was, "Thou fool!" It was not the social injustice of private accumulations that was attacked, but the spiritual peril to the individual who possessed them. There is no program in the gospels to remove social injustice; there is an appeal to individuals to seek the true riches.

There is only one story from Jesus from which the capitalist can draw the slightest grain of comfort; that is, the parable of the talents, and then only so long as he misunderstands it. It has often been made the basis for the teaching of stewardship. That is a misapprehension, for it is a parable, not an illustration, like the story of the rich fool. The man who received five talents did not, in fact, exemplify Christian stewardship. He gave full play to the acquisitive instincts and made 100 per cent on his lord's money. Jesus was not pronouncing a blessing upon 100 per cent profit-making, but upon faithfulness in serving the interests of one's lord. We must be just as faithful in serving God as the children of Mammon in the pursuit of wealth. What faithfulness called for in the mind of Jesus must be learned elsewhere. It certainly did *not* consist in laying up treasures on earth.

It is an unhistorical illusion to suppose that Jesus or any part of early Christianity sought to change social and economic institutions and a belief that he did will only lead to misleading deductions for our time if we seek such a goal. That there were economic consequences of the conduct of the early Christians is of course true. But men awaiting the miracle of

God's new age did not undertake the transformation of the institutions of this one. When Justin and the Apologists of the second century sought to commend Christianity to the Roman world, it never occurred to them to contend that it might be the means of bringing in a more just social order or of abolishing war. They were not turning their backs upon the expressed purpose of Jesus. They were making new adjustments to social changes as every succeeding generation has been compelled to do.

We cannot follow in detail the fascinating story of the social teachings of the Christian church, but we must examine certain aspects of the beginnings of Protestantism. The famous thesis of Max Weber that Calvinism was the parent of the spirit of capitalism has been greatly modified by succeeding investigators. Nevertheless, no one can seriously question the conclusion of Tawney, "The capitalist spirit is as old as history. . . . But it found in certain aspects of later Puritanism a tonic which braced its energies and fortified its already vigorous temper."¹ In feudalistic Germany, Luther laid the foundation of a dualistic solution of the social problem. It was not a cleavage between the monastic life and the world, but between the inner relation of the believer to God, and his outward calling in a world where the Sermon on the Mount obviously could not be applied. In bourgeois Geneva, Calvin was drawn in a quite different direction. He was the first prominent Christian theologian to teach the legitimacy of interest. Though his rule in Geneva was essentially authoritarian, particularly among the English Puritans, the emphasis came more and more to an individualism. Protestantism came to mean individualism in the approach to God as capitalism meant individualism in the conquest of economic ends. Especially in the Reformed churches it was the commercial virtues which were stressed—diligence, sobriety, thrift, and honesty. The battle for liberty of conscience and for liberty of economic activity were fought out together.

Though John Wesley was an Arminian in his theology, his social point of view was not essentially different from that of the Calvinistic churches. He preached, "Make all you can; save all you can; give all you can." He himself did all three. He knew that thrift and industry enabled people to acquire wealth, and that wealth brought the inner decay of religion, but it apparently never occurred to him to challenge the divine foundations of a capitalistic society. The sons of John Wesley still make all they can, but

¹Tawney, R. H., *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 226.

they do not give all they can, and the net result is often a sanctification of greed.

The dilemma of religion for us arises from this historic union. Institutional Christianity, particularly Protestantism, is imbedded in the capitalistic order. Unlike Catholicism, which had its own pre-capitalistic culture, Protestantism has never possessed an independent culture apart from capitalistic society. Our immediate background is not the position of Jesus toward property, but that of the Reformation with its ideal of individual discipline and service to God by faithfulness in our calling, interpreted in the spirit of capitalism. Any man of wealth who desires to join a Christian church has no such difficulty as a camel would have in going through the eye of a needle. He comes as an angel in disguise to save an unbalanced budget.

Our churches have acquired vast property holdings in the development of their enterprises; they promote large philanthropies which can be furthered only by the profits of industry; they depend upon a professional leadership which is supported by the economic surplus. Some of its leaders are outspoken in their attacks upon economic injustice. But they are placed in the embarrassing position that if the evils they attack were really abolished, the budgets of the institutions they direct could no longer be met. A living wage for every family would of course provide ample income for the support of religious enterprises. But can private capitalism ever attain such a goal? Under a social ownership of capital, how is a personal concern such as religion to be financed among people who are firmly committed to a separation of church and state? The dilemma of the conscientious Christian is well epitomized in the embarrassment of a good woman who discovered that she had paid her contribution to missionary work in Korea by the interest on a bond sold by a company engaged in the commercial exploitation of Korea for Japan.

So intimate does the union of capitalism and Christianity appear, that for the revolutionary communist an attack upon the former must mean an attack upon the religion which bestows upon it ethical sanctions. In their eyes, the churches have completely surrendered to the spirit of capitalism. They are simply the ambulance brigade to minister to the sick and the wounded from the economic struggle. Communists are furious therefore at an institution which deals in opiates to deaden the pain of a system of exploitation.

There are two general attitudes which are taken by the church in the present situation. Some Christians take the other-worldly attitude. It is the business of religion to keep men from drink and profanity and sexual irregularity in this life and save them for a heaven beyond. It has no business in concerning itself with such questions as mortgage foreclosures, or the wages paid in cheap department stores. It would hardly occur to most revolting farmers in Iowa or unemployed workers in Detroit that they should turn to the Christian church to remedy social conditions that had become intolerable. They would only expect to hear about patience and contentment and trust in God, and they are in no mood to hearken unto "spiritual platitudes." Let no one despise a religion which insists upon lifting men's eyes to eternal horizons, but increasing numbers believe that religion has something more to do than "to make the individual a more sufferable member of his group."

In revolt against this narrowly individualistic interpretation of religion, there has been a movement which has unfortunately been called the "social gospel." What is meant thereby is not really a gospel at all, but a stress upon the social duties of redeemed men. It has believed that social institutions must be changed as well as individual men. It has taken the revolutionary attitude of the earlier "sects," but instead of depending upon apocalyptic expectations, it has sought political and social reforms according to the liberal philosophy of life and what it thought was the ideals of Jesus. This "gospel" has been formulated in social creeds and noble church pronouncements. But the best friends of the movement are the first to admit that since the pioneer days of Rauschenbusch and Gladden the actual achievements are distressingly slight. We have proclaimed social shibboleths *ad nauseam*, but we have not found a method of realizing our goal. A prominent churchman tells us that we must socialize the entire cultus, but the most notable fact about his book is the absence of concrete suggestions as to how this is to be done.

The innocuous character of much of the "social gospel" movement is well illustrated by the adoption of the last Social Creed of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. It affirms that the church should stand for a long list of noble ideals. Yet I should hazard the guess that an overwhelming majority of the signers had voted a month earlier to keep the apostle of rugged individualism in office for four more years, a man of many fine qualities, but one whose basic philosophy is quite the antithesis

of the Social Creed. Many of these churchmen may have defended themselves by saying that in such a complex political campaign they could not vote for all of their convictions. That only illustrates the fact that they had little idea how these beautiful ideals were to be translated into reality. How much more is that the case when pious platitudes about the golden rule are solemnly proclaimed in our adult Bible classes!

It is not strange therefore that a considerable number of the bolder spirits within the church have come to feel that much in the current "social gospel" is futile, innocuous, and sentimental. They feel a permanent debt to those who have proclaimed that social institutions must be converted as well as the men who are living under them. But we must analyze the problem anew and not simply repeat the old shibboleths. The causes of the meager achievements must be more fully realized.

As a student of the New Testament, I would place in the forefront the mistaken reading of the gospels which underlies much that is popularly written on the subject.² The "social teachings of Jesus" has become such a commonplace phrase that anyone is sure to be misunderstood if he insists that the teachings of Jesus were strictly individual. It is a question of terminology and there will be no confusion if our terms are carefully defined. But that is just what is often neglected. It is patent to all that Jesus had much to say about man's relation to his neighbor, about possessions, divorce, and the other problems of life, for man's love toward God was to be shown in his love toward men. It is to be noted that these are all about what the individual shall do in these relations; Jesus does not deal with how to change the social institutions. It is just the merit of the "social gospel" to propose that the latter should be undertaken by the modern church. But when it appeals to the "social teachings of Jesus" it is appealing to words spoken with a very different purpose.

The Ritschlian conception of the kingdom of God was of a new society built by men on earth according to the principles of Jesus. Jesus called

² Among the more objective presentations may be named, Mathews, Shailer, *Jesus on Social Institutions*; Barry, F. R., *Christianity and the Modern World*, chaps. 3-4; Grant, F. C., "Method in Studying Jesus' Social Teachings, in *Studies in Early Christianity*, pp. 239-81; it is superfluous to call attention to E. Troeltsch, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Church*, but readers of this article may have overlooked "The Ethic of Jesus and the Social Problem," by Reinhold Niebuhr in *RELIGION IN LIFE*, I, pp. 198-209, and "The Economic Factor in the Genesis of Christianity," by R. T. Stamm, in *The Lutheran Church Quarterly* for July, 1933, where he deals with (1) the economic forces leading to the execution of Jesus; (2) the economic bases of the apocalyptic ideal; (3) the economic conditions affecting Christians in the first century.

men to an absolute life of love, not because he expected that society would thus be gradually transformed into the kingdom of God. It was God himself who would send his kingdom; Jesus was preparing individuals for the new divine society on earth. His historic task was therefore entirely different from that conceived by the preachers of the "social gospel." When we set out on our very different undertaking, we must not expect complete guidance from the gospels. Our strategy must be based upon a realistic analysis of the present situation. The inner life of individuals must still be transformed and here we cannot go beyond the ideals of Jesus. But it is not honoring him to pretend that we can find from him a technique for transforming institutions.

The beginning of such a realistic analysis would seem to lie in a frank recognition that the "social gospel" has usually been an ecclesiastical counterpart to the reform and muck-raking movements in politics which John Chamberlain has so aptly surveyed in *Farewell to Reform*. Any such generalization is of course extremely vulnerable, but it contains enough of truth to bring out the fact that attacks upon social evils that do not get down to the underlying causes are doomed at the outset to disappointing results. The desire to "do good" and yet preserve the *status quo* is self-defeating. "Liberal reform" is not any more successful when it is prompted by religious idealism than when it is a purely secular program.

In the second place, the small progress which the "social gospel" has made among the laity of the church brings home the inherent weakness of the Christian church as an instrument for effecting fundamental social change. Religion is an aspect of the life of men and women living under a given economic order. Some of them suffer under its injustices; others profit from its privileges. Churches may be united to fight social evils, but how can they be united to overthrow the privileges from which the most powerful members profit? Detached bystanders say with a little cynicism that no matter how radical words ecclesiastical bodies may adopt in their resolutions, they would not possibly *act* contrary to the group prejudices. Churches may profess a keen interest in the plight of the debtor classes of the nation. But when the endowments of its own institutions include millions of dollars of mortgages, could any church suggest that debt-scaling begin here? It has been easy to work up righteous indignation against the brewers; not many of them are church officials. It is much more difficult to arouse the same conscience against bankers who have con-

tributed to the ruin of multitudes; not a few of them sit in the high councils of the church.

In the third place, an increasing group within the church is convinced that a few reforms will not suffice, but that we need a radically changed basis for the social order. Paul Tillich, one of the leading German Christian socialists, exiled by the Nazi regime, states this conviction, "The peculiarly demonic element in the situation of capitalist society is this, that the conflict is not the expression of individual arbitrariness . . . but is necessarily bound up with the maintenance of the capitalist economic system and is the result of that system itself."³ We have depended upon acquisitiveness and competition to get the work of the world done. A religion that presumes to give divine sanctions to love and good will must attack the foundations of such a society. To talk about Christianizing a social order based upon unchristian premises is as stupid as it is futile. A Christian social program must lay the axe at the root of the tree. Jesus taught us that the innermost springs of personal conduct must be transformed. Society will never be Christianized until the basic drives around which it is organized are radically altered.

When we face the question of a technique for social action to attain justice for the weaker and poorer, this group insists that the church must accept the fact of class struggle. It is not a question of preaching class struggle; it is here. Any attempt to be neutral simply means that the church lines up against those it professes to help. In the sphere of institutions, power must be met by power. Social justice can never triumph without some recourse to coercion. Until the church accepts that fact, it is doomed to the rôle of a bystander mouthing platitudes. It may influence individuals to nobler idealism, but it will not be a force for social revolution. True, class struggle is not Christian love nor Buddhist mercy nor Confucian reciprocity. But as long as religion confines itself to absolutes it will remain an ineffective protest against the realities of the social structure.

There is no denying that such ideas come as a great shock to the majority of the Christian church. It is no wonder that some look upon them as nothing less than a denial of the adequacy of the gospel. How can anyone say that love is the heart of Christianity and then admit that for the most comprehensive objectives we must have recourse to coercion? Is that the spirit of the cross? It was borne by Jesus and if we are to follow him

³ Tillich, Paul, *The Religious Situation*, p. 75.

must not we also take up our cross? The cross is the very antithesis of class struggle. It means vicarious suffering, the bearing of an undeserved penalty. That great social prophet, Bishop McConnell, has a chapter in his volume of Barrows lectures entitled, "Social Cross-Bearing." Is not that the road to social redemption?

What do we mean by social cross-bearing? We may mean the bearing of crosses by individuals on behalf of social groups. That goes on to-day in countless families and in worthy groups of all kinds. Unselfish men and women are sacrificing personal good for the sake of others, that good may come to all. No Christian transformation of society will ever come without that kind of cross-bearing. Probably the biggest contribution of a direct character which the church can make to-day is to cultivate that spirit of renunciation in the hearts of those who have called themselves Christian. If violent revolution is to be avoided, it will be because through the Christian church a significant body of men and women have been so inculcated with the spirit of Jesus that they will act against their immediate selfish interest for the good of the whole group.

But after all, that is individual cross-bearing. Large groups never bear crosses. A good many Germans thought that the treaty of Versailles compelled them to bear a cross. No one can understand what is going on in Germany to-day who does not realize that. It is true that a hard lot was forced upon them, but it is the very essence of cross-bearing that it is voluntarily accepted and vicariously endured. Nineteen centuries of Christian history reveal no illustration of a nation or social class which has endured injustice without revengeful hate any more than it reveals a case of voluntary renunciation of privilege by a nation or class. It is not a denial of the adequacy of the gospel to point to the obvious fact that group conduct can never be Christian in the sense that the conduct of individuals may. If we believe the teaching in the fifth chapter of Matthew, we must agree that the essence of Christian conduct lies in the motive that guides to action. Groups may be coerced into unselfish action, but unselfish motives will never be secured in the group as a whole. Any Christian strategy which expects to await that day has rightly been called sentimental and unreal. It is not idealism but apostasy from the cause of social righteousness.

The enormous difficulties ahead are apparent, but fortunately or unfortunately the death-knell of a competitive capitalism will not depend upon the organized church entering the lists. Prophetic voices, inspired no less

than Amos and Isaiah of old, will not be silenced. Basic economic realities cannot be argued away. The alternative faced by the church is whether it will go down defending obsolete institutions, or whether it can have some part in the creation of a more Christian organization of society. The entrenched defenders of privilege are within the church as well as without. The first responsibility of the church is to proclaim to them and to all men "the treasure which we have in earthen vessels." But if the church pretends to be neutral in the class struggle which is here, it will thereby reveal that it is more interested in maintaining its own worldly position than in securing justice for those to whom it should minister.

We have a ministry of encouragement and comfort, of warning and hope for troubled and harassed men and women. There is the difficult tension which is inevitable in the lives of sincere men who profit from privilege and yet are eager to do the Christian thing. There is the deprivation of masses who are the victims not of individuals like Insull or Kreuger but of a system where they are possible, a system in which the strongest individual feels helpless.

We have an institution which is daily tempted to save its own life. This calls for such a struggle that there is little time or energy left to think much about saving society. Certainly the indifference of the masses will not be dispelled by a self-centered church. We need an organization that is willing to lose its own life, if need be, that more of the righteousness of God may become incarnate in society.

We have a dilemma to face: how can religion conserve the truth which Jesus stated so uncompromisingly—that possessions present a supreme spiritual peril—and at the same time give ethical sanction to the material foundations of an ongoing society? How can religious institutions be supported—and the burden of proof rests upon those who imagine that the religious spirit can propagate itself without some body—and high religion aid in successfully destroying an economic order that thwarts its ethical and spiritual ideals? This is the dilemma which we face. I do not know the way out, but I am confident that the first step lies in seeing where we are.

Prophecy and Asceticism

JOHN PATERSON

THE Old Testament has few references to asceticism, and that for an obvious reason. Poverty was a much more terrifying thing to the Hebrew because it involved not only economic hardship, but also religious stigma and moral disrepute. "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament;" the book of Job sufficiently justifies that word of Bacon and is an adequate commentary on it. There was no gospel for the poor; there was only social ostracism; "As one from whom men hide their faces we esteemed him smitten" (Isaiah 53. 3). That is why the Hebrew has so little interest in asceticism and why it found so little place in his scheme of things.

But there is one strange incident recorded in the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah in which we see clearly the prophetic reaction to something very like asceticism. It might be more in accord with fact to call these Rechabites "champions or apostles of the simple life," but they are generally taken as representing a type of asceticism and the whole matter is worthy of consideration.

The story of the Rechabites is an acted parable, for the Oriental thinks with his eye and he loves the concrete. It may not be easy to cordialize with an "ens rationis," but it is easy to understand how the human sympathies of the prophet were kindled at the sight of these so human Rechabites. Here, as elsewhere, the word is made flesh and the message comes by the eye-gate.

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord . . . saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites . . . and give them wine to drink. Then I took . . . the whole house of the Rechabites . . . and I set before the sons of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups, and I said, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons for ever; neither shall ye build houses nor sow seed nor plant vineyard nor have any; but all your days ye shall dwell in tents, that ye may live many days in the land where you sojourn."

Now this is not a temperance lesson, although it has often been so

interpreted; it is much more. It is the expression of a philosophy of life; the simple life, if you will. It is the protest of men who believe that religion is opposed to culture; it is the voice of the nomad who believes civilization to be all a mistake and that every movement to which we give the name progress is essentially a movement away from simplicity and away from God. They might have found support in Hosea and Amos of the ancient prophets and in Gandhi of the modern. Doubtless all such movements, be they ancient or modern, will always find a response in unimaginative minds. Particularly in times of decadence will anything uncouth and unusual not lack supporters and admirers. So it was here and so again was it in Athens in Paul's day, and just as Paul did not fail to exploit his opportunity so Jeremiah found his chance and took it. While he admires the form of the vow he criticizes and rejects absolutely its content.

For what is this content? The ideal here is that of the nomad life, and all the marks and tokens of civilization and settled life it resolutely eschews. All that Israel had found in Canaan was evil and the only hope for the people was that they should renounce civilization and return to the desert. God was a desert God and only there could he be found. "For all the ills of Judah they offered—a tent" (Welch). The solution was simple, but insufficient. It is easy, of course, for us to see the fallacy of such a position. To the Rechabite the change from nomad to settled life was a step backward, since it carried men away from the stern simplicity of the wilderness and involved the actual loss of God. Logically enough they would have said that when you have lost anything the correct procedure is to go back to where you lost it and find it again. Back to Horeb and the desert land was their cry, that the nation may find again its soul and its God. But the poverty of such an idea is clear for it makes God dependent upon a given organization of life and implies that progress in culture is inconsistent with the growth of real religion. It limits God and it opposes culture and religion. One may say that freely, while admiring the Rechabites, men and women who could be loyal to a vow even when that vow entailed hardship and deprivation. Nor is Jeremiah blind to that side of the matter for he draws the obvious lesson: "The words of Jonadab . . . are performed; and unto this day . . . they obey their father's commandment; but I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking, and ye have not hearkened unto me." But even the most eloquent sermons fail to break the hard human heart.

The danger is always present of falling into this same fallacy, the fallacy of the Rechabites. We deify the past and become simply "*temporis acti laudatores*"; we say "Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6. 16). We talk of the old-time religion and sigh for the high days of long ago; we decry theological advance and churches cling to outworn creeds and symbols or seek to direct our every step by "imitation of Jesus" or adherence to literal first-century practice. With a lofty exclusiveness some such institutions will even designate themselves "the Church of God." The human mind somehow craves the authority of codes and conventions and a church that speaks with an "*ex cathedra*" utterance does not lack worshippers. But all that is really a denial of the Holy Spirit and his power. Illumined faith can never rest there, for to such faith the changing conditions of life are but expressions of the divine will and each such change, which we call progress, only offers new opportunities of realizing the worth and vitality of religion. That is the view of the great prophets as it is also the view of our Lord. "The Spirit shall take of the things that are mine and show them unto you." "God has yet more light to break forth from his word," said Robinson to the pilgrims at Leyden; to deny that is to deny the Holy Spirit. The prophets were the forward-looking men of their time, but the Rechabites looked backward; the prophets were positive while the ascetics were negative. The future is with the prophets. "They (the Rechabites) vanished from Israel's religion as men must do who represent no more than the past, when a movement which can preserve the best of the past for the uses of the future, and is not therefore afraid of the future, takes possession of the life of a nation" (Welch).

It is worth observing that when the apostle sets forth the whole armor of God he enumerates the various pieces thus: "having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith . . . and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit." God does not give any protecting armor for a man's back. God does not expect a man to turn his back to the foe. Monasticism and asceticism flee from life. The true prophet, like Jeremiah, marches breast forward to the battle in the wilderness or in the busy city street, determined if wounded to have all his wounds in front.

Prayer and Poetry

HUGHELL FOSBROKE

IN his lively and charming Leslie Stephen Lecture on *The Name and Nature of Poetry*, A. E. Housman asks, Is there such a thing as pure unmingled poetry, poetry independent of meaning? The question is by no means a rhetorical one, but is to be taken in all seriousness; and the lecturer's own approach to an answer is indicated by his choice of William Blake as the most poetical of all poets; and this on the ground that again and again he "gives us poetry neat, or adulterated with so little meaning that nothing except poetic emotion is perceived and matters."

The author of "The Shropshire Lad" thus touches upon a subject which in recent years has been much debated in the realm of literary criticism. In France the controversy was launched by the Abbé Henri Bremond, whose death in August, 1933, brought to the religious world anew a realization of its indebtedness to one who had given to the service of the great Christian tradition a mind exquisitely sensitive to the claims of literature. His monumental *Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France*, now happily in process of translation into English, is distinguished alike for its profound religious perceptiveness and its delicate and subtle appreciation of the harmonies of prose and poetry. It was in 1925 that the sometime Jesuit who had become a member of the French Academy delivered a lecture entitled *La Poésie Pure*. His thesis ran as follows: Every poem owes its distinctively poetic character to the presence, the radiance, the transforming and unifying activity of a mysterious reality which we call pure poetry. This is often given in a few lines or even in a phrase which suffices to stir something in us, to put us in a state of grace poetically so that we seek to linger and enjoy, where in prose we move impatiently on, intent upon the meaning. In poetry, meaning, logical sequence of ideas, story, detailed description, are so much impure admixture marring the perfection of the poetic experience. If it be urged that it is the music of the language which has this strange power it may be admitted that this affords partial explanation, but it cannot account for the distinction between the verbal music of prose and that of poetry. Bossuet's prose, he urged, has its own rich organ notes, but these serve only to reinforce the persuasive power of his eloquence

and do not charm the reader into rapt amaze as the music of poetry does. And he brought his argument to a climax by adapting a saying of Walter Pater's, "All the arts aspire to the condition of music." "No," said the Abbé, "all the arts aspire each by its own proper magical medium—words, notes, colors, lines—they all aspire to the condition of prayer."

The lecture provoked an interesting debate in the French literary reviews, and in defense of his position Bremond did not shrink from any of the consequences of his theory. "To accept or even to bring about the silencing of the interior voices, or in other words to choke inspiration is a horrible thing; but to acquiesce in not translating this inspiration into verse is the finest homage one can render poetry. The more one is a poet the more easily one resists the temptation to write verse, because the greater one's horror of all poetic expression which of necessity brings in its train, ideas, images, sentiments." And again, "Pure poetry is silence like mysticism. The poet keeps silence or at least inclines to silence, because the deadly precision of the human word attenuates, disfigures, limits and degrades that mysterious reality which inspiration has allowed him to see, to feel, and almost to touch." The English scholar and poet and the French savant are then in substantial agreement upon this point though, skeptic and priest, they come to it from very different backgrounds.

The Abbé's thought is dominated by his concern for religion. "Pure poetry is silence like mysticism." "The arts all aspire to the condition of prayer." These sentences lie at the heart of his interest in the whole subject, and it was not surprising that he presently published a small but significant volume, *Prayer and Poetry*, in which he explored the affinity between the inspiration of the poet and mystical experience. He began with a rapid review of the history of literary criticism notable for its judicious selection and masterly discernment of principles. Inevitably and rightly he threw into sharp relief the contrast between the blind rationalism of the eighteenth century and the new insight of the Romantic movement. What he sought to show, and had no difficulty in showing, is that both in the thought of the poets themselves and in the more discerning æsthetic criticism, there is the inevitable recognition of a something beyond reason which, as it has the power to enrich and unify the poet's experience, also enables him to bring his readers to a participation in that experience. A long quotation from Matthew Arnold stood him in good stead. And it seems altogether fitting that English testimony should be invoked, for the theory of inspiration for

which the French writer is contending is almost a commonplace of the English literary tradition. For Wordsworth, as we know, poetry was "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge," "the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science." Or, to take an American example, Charles Eliot Norton, in his last lecture at Harvard, spoke of poetry as a spirit that exists not only in literature, but in art, in music, in human activity, and doubtless in the whole of life—something almost the same as beauty itself, that magical presence which a man from time to time feels surrounding him everywhere, not quite out of sight, not quite out of ear-shot, but for the most part unheard and unseen amid the roar of the world and the grinding of our own egotism.

Bremond's specific contribution lay in his calling attention to the way in which poetic sensibility resembles mystical experience. Just as inspiration, in itself indefinable, quickens and illuminates mind and heart and will, by affording contact with a larger life, so the mystical ecstasy involves communion with a reality not to be apprehended by any purely intellectual process, but out of this communion comes, in Tauler's phrase, "a distinct, more luminous, more perfect knowledge of things." Out of his wide reading in literature and mysticism he provides many illustrations of this affinity, and indeed, once it is pointed out, a literary critic like John Middleton Murry seems justified in his surprise that more use has not been made of the corroboration of religious by poetic experience.

Yet grateful as Christian thought may well be for this fundamental thesis and the skill with which it is maintained, the book is not without the weakness that attends every effort to base arguments for religion upon an appeal to the irrational. In fact Bremond proves to be seriously affected by the theory of pure poetry to which he had committed himself in the heat of controversy. To be sure the term "pure poetry" hardly appears save as in a footnote he admits that it is only an abstraction, but actually the idea haunts him throughout his argument. It is not his exaltation of the unique and indescribable essence of poetry that is at fault, for in this he may be matched by many English writers. They, however, remain aware of the note of rhapsody in their utterances. They do not, as Bremond, attempt to isolate the ineffable and then make this unknown the ground of logical deduction. His scorn of expression because it limits and degrades the mysterious reality of poetic experience, his conviction that in the end to translate inspiration into verse is to do it violence, really make themselves felt in

all his treatment of both poetry and prayer. For it is one thing by the use of all one's power of thought to come into the presence of that which is beyond thought; it is quite another to use this something more to cast contempt on the very process of thought by which it has been recognized. Yet that is what the Abbé does in effect when he isolates the moment of ecstatic vision and treats it with its suspension of all the ordinary faculties as an end in itself, as if its very untranslatableness guaranteed its supreme worth. A chapter on the necessary collaboration of Animus and Anima does indeed attempt to restore the balance. The terms are those used in a parable by the distinguished poet Paul Claudel. Animus represents the surface self, rational knowledge; Anima, the deep self, mystical or poetic knowledge. A long and valuable note insists on the essential and constant solidarity which binds together these two kinds of knowledge. Yet the suggestion remains that they are mutually exclusive and obviously the descent upon particulars is thought of as a falling away from the higher state of communion with reality. But surely the poet's ability to find the inevitable phrases which can communicate his experience can be only arbitrarily distinguished from his power of vision. It is the glory of poetic achievement that words, far from limiting or degrading the poet's sense of life's mysterious depth, enable him to transmit to others what he has seen and felt. It may even fairly be argued that in finding language the poet is himself empowered to discover the deeper meaning of his own experience. The famous opening line of *Endymion* which Bremond quotes offers an illustration. If, as seems likely, Keats wrote in the first instance, "A thing of beauty is a constant joy," the plump finality of the concluding phrase would indicate that he had not as yet felt to the full the dynamic eternity of beauty. When the line was made to read, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," the liquid flow of the final syllables reveals the poet's new awareness of beauty's living and unfailing power. The phrase has helped him to understand. The moment of vision and the moment of expression are one, almost indistinguishable.

The Abbé recognizes the miracle involved in the endowment of words with the capacity to communicate ecstasy, but he seems to place it on a lower level than what he calls the higher poetic state. No doubt he thus discriminates because human effort plays so large a part in the shaping of verse, whereas the essential poetic experience like that of the mystic seems to come entirely of itself, and its givenness is taken as a sign of its superior

value. It would indeed be ill to deny the presence of this mysterious factor, or to fail to recognize its complete otherness from anything that can be attained by deliberate effort alone, but there is grave danger of forgetting that the great moments come only to minds prepared and that the disciplined effort which precedes vision or follows it for the sake of conveying it to others, partakes also of divine grace. Wordsworth is to the point when he speaks of "the vision and the *faculty* divine."

"The source of inspiration," says Bremond, "can be reached by no manner of reflection." True enough, but is it ever reached, can it be reached by those who do not reflect? We are obviously here engaged in the familiar discussion of the respective merits of rational and intuitive knowledge, a discussion which must always end in the discovery that each is indispensable to the other. It may be worth recalling a passage in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, in which the relationship between the two is splendidly put. He is speaking of the way in which Shakespeare achieved, in the writings of his plays, a reconciliation between creative power and intellectual energy. "What then shall we say? Even this; that Shakespeare, no mere child of nature; no automaton of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it; first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings and at length gave birth to that stupendous power."

Again Bremond's isolation and exaltation of the moment of apprehension, whether mystical or poetical, at the expense of its context, disparages the will and the emotions as well as the intellectual faculty. It looks in the direction of that passivity which has always haunted the mystical tradition. There is indeed a chapter on The Specific Activity of the Mystics, which recognizes the danger of the emphasis upon passive states and insists that, along with the suspension or paralysis of the ordinary faculties, there is a redoubling of the deeper activities of the soul as it dilates itself to take the divine gift into the inmost recesses of its being. But it is to be noted that this activity is one which is directed entirely away from earth and the human scene, and is in fact only a kind of receptivity. So in the final chapter it is asserted that "the poet in the last resort is but an evanescent mystic whose mysticism breaks down." Breaks down, because he turns back to the world in the effort to communicate his message. In other words, he forsakes pure poetry. This is his infirmity; poetic inspiration, with its desire

to share the vision, moves on a lower level than that mystical experience in which the soul is wholly absorbed in the act of uniting itself with reality. "The inspiration," he says explicitly, "is in the original movement and not in the course of action which follows it; . . . in that delicious numbness of which we have just heard, and not in the labor which is going to follow." No doubt the note of detachment is an indispensable element of the mystical experience, an element all too easily overlooked in these days of bustling activity; but to take it for the whole, treat it as the supreme climax to the exclusion of everything else, leads all too easily to a morbid quietism. It is worth remembering that quietism has always tended to neglect and even to despise vocal prayer.

It is because this tendency reveals itself in Bremond that it seems fair to speak of the essential passivity involved in his conception of poetry and prayer, and confirmation for this is to be found in his treatment of Aristotle's *Catharsis*. Confessedly this is a very thorny subject. There has been endless discussion of the great sentence, "Tragedy then is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude . . . through pity and fear effecting the purgation of such emotions." Evidently "the purgation (*Catharsis*) of such emotions" is the crucial phrase. Bremond makes play with some of the fanciful interpretations of French classical criticism, and then for his part contends that purging means purging away. "The *Catharsis* purges us of all pity, of all fear, of all love," and must do this because "the passions obstruct the activity of the deeper soul." In this he is again controlled by his conviction that to feel deeply is a falling away from that emotionless communion with reality, which is the *summum bonum*. But the truer interpretation is surely that which thinks of the cleansing of the emotions. In the presence of great tragedy, the spectator, face to face with suffering far greater than his own can ever be, is lifted out of himself into the great stream of life. What is purely personal and self-regarding, drops away. Fear becomes a deep sense of awe before life's mystery; as the taint of egoism is removed, pity loses its note of superiority and is changed into love. They who are thus moved do not feel less but more in that moment of understanding, for they are one with all mankind. The Abbé's failure to see this was the result of his preoccupation with the soul's movement away from the here and now. The logic of his position would lead him on to what Hocking calls "a world-avoiding, illusion-casting, zero-worshiping mysticism." What is wanting is the discriminating

balance of von Hügel's account of the mystical state. "The active and the contemplative life are ultimately but two mutually complementary sides of life so that no life ever quite succeeds in eliminating either element, and life, *caeteris paribus*, is complete and perfect as it embraces both elements each at its fullest and the two in perfect interaction; the Negative Abstractive way peremptorily requires also the other, the Affirmative Concrete way." This is worlds away from the ideal of a passionless soul in the embrace of a passionless God, which Bremond's thought would seem to set before us.

For in the end this passivity strangely infects the conception of ultimate being. Reality would seem to lie inert in the background until, as it were, stimulated into some sort of response by the seeking soul, which in turn becomes merely receptive. There is little or no feeling for the way in which reality comes to meet us. God himself is immobilized. Probably von Hügel has this in mind when, in speaking of the one-sided character of Neo-Platonism, he notes its incapacity to find any descending movement of the Divine into human life. It is just this movement of God earthward that we are now learning to take seriously. Whitehead's insistence on the creative passage of nature gives new meaning to the scholastic statement that God is One, Actus Purus, Sheer Energy. Truth, beauty, goodness, are no remote abstractions; they are the ways in which the Divine Energy breaks in upon human life. The will of God to create and to redeem is in ceaseless operation. The quickening light-producing effect of inspiration, the strange capacity for endowing words with new power, are not indications that for the poet contact with reality has been broken as he turns toward his fellow men. Rather he has become the vehicle through which reality is revealing itself. Consider again the Abbé's account of the three phases of the poetic experience as a whole: "A dull and painful gestation of mind or heart with tumultuous useless attempts at invention or decision; then comes the spark of inspiration; and then a joyful fertility of the mind, or a gay decision of the heart." His further statement that the first and last phases contain nothing but the more or less intense exercise of our ordinary faculties, may be disregarded and attention fastened instead on the relation between the three phases. The depth and richness of the great moment of simplification are in proportion to the vigor and sincerity of the thinking that has gone into the time of preparation, just as the same depth and richness are fully known only as the labor of expression is marked by a like sincerity,

and the poet is not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Is it not in the process as a whole that the true analogue of prayer is to be found? It has its origin in a confused welter of longings and desires. Its first effort must be to bring order out of chaos, for true prayer is the expression of our whole being, not simply of our surface wishes. It is the soul's sincere desire unuttered or expressed. It is only as the struggle to know our own will is honest and persistent, that we have anything to offer for union with the Divine Will. The moment of apprehension that God gives discovers to us the depths of our own being as it unifies our desires, purging them of selfishness and giving them creative power. This has obvious affinity with the enriching simplification that comes to the poet. There follows then the translation into deed and word of this new understanding of the will of God and our own desire, the return upon life with enhanced perception and energy. Through every stage an Other than self has been co-operating. In the first promptings and strivings God is at work as surely as he is in the moment of apprehension, and must be in the task that follows if it is to be fruitful.

Prayer means then no blind surrender to the Divine Will, even as poetry is no mere absorption in the poetic ecstasy. In that fusion of deepest longing with the purpose of God, all that is sincere and real of individual desire is preserved and made effective. As the poet speaks of ultimate reality with his own unique note of understanding that has its source in the struggle both before and after vision comes, so in prayer personality is unified and deepened through the soul's offering of itself to God, and the effort to know one's own desires and to bring them, enriched and clarified, to bear upon life, plays its very significant part in the process. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God, but each of us must declare his unique sonship with his own individual accents.

"And so the Word had breath and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds,
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought."

One might almost dare to make the last line read: "And power of true poetic thought!": for that life was at once the perfect poem and the perfect prayer.

Theology and the New Order

EUGENE W. LYMAN

DURING the last twelvemonth a great deal of history has been made. Indeed, the furlough of eight months which I recently spent abroad serves to frame in, for my own thought, a most spectacular series of events. In that brief space of time occurred in America the banking crisis at the moment of President Roosevelt's inauguration, the voting by Congress to the President of extraordinary powers—greater even than those thought necessary in war-time—the abandonment of the gold standard by the United States in close conjunction with the Washington conferences with Premier MacDonald and the representatives of other European powers, and in the ensuing months the organization of the N. R. A.

Across the Atlantic in the same period came the burning of the Reichstag building, the German elections and the subsequent Revolution with its repercussions throughout Europe. When I reached Geneva the British plan for the limitation of armaments was being debated, and many hoped that a Convention might be arrived at which would furnish the basis for the World Economic Conference. But hopes for results from the Peace Conference soon waned. The Four Power Pact, to be sure, was signed, but the World Economic Conference proved to be abortive. I found students proceeding to Geneva for study, but a professor of international relations exclaimed with discouragement, in view of the rapid intensification of nationalism, "What now am I to teach!"

The somber background for this drama of events is the continuance of the world-wide economic depression and the vast amount of unemployment, with the attendant human suffering.

But other phases of this rapidly moving drama appear if one widens the perspective of space and time only a little. Then one will include the Spanish Revolution, the agitations in India, Japan's conquest of Manchuria and her withdrawal from the League of Nations and the successive phases of Russian Soviet policy.

I believe that we shall rightly conceive this swiftly moving historical process, in the midst of which we find ourselves, only if we think of it as a

part of the emergence of a new order. By this new order I do not mean something restricted geographically, like President Roosevelt's "New Deal." Nor do I mean by the word "new" that this order upon which we are entering will be obviously and inevitably a better order than the one which it is replacing. I mean first of all that this new order will be widely different from the old; so that, when it has fully taken shape, it will render the social presuppositions of our thinking different. Certain ideas which we have taken for granted—ideas pertaining to the individualistic, competitive, private-enterprise scheme of society into which most of us were born—will no longer be taken for granted, and other, quite different, ideas will become axiomatic.

Perhaps even my adoption of the word "order" may seem to beg a fundamental question, since the World War so nearly reduced society to chaos, and since another war is among the grave possibilities. But the transition I would have us think of is one like that from the Holy Roman Empire in the days of its fullest strength to the feudal system, or from the feudal system to the modern national state; or, again, from the guild system to *laissez-faire* commercialism and machine production—during which transitions war repeatedly wrought its havoc. There is doubtless an element of faith in the assumption that we are to look forward to a new order, analogous to the preceding ones, but as different from them as they were from each other; but this element of faith I must ask the reader to share with me as a basis for the present discussion.

What character the new order will take on I shall not presume to say. Certain trends, indeed, are apparent to us all, but whether they reveal structural principles of the new order only profound study can hope to discern; and even so, many points can be settled only by the course of events. But apparently the industrial revolution, which came with machine production and which has been shaped according to the principles of individualism, is now being followed by a technical revolution, which cannot be guided according to the principles of individualism and which renders imperative some form of collectivism. The methods of production introduced by the technical revolution call for a planned economy, if society is to be able to consume the goods which can be so abundantly produced. The only agency for establishing a planned economy appears to be the political power—hence our heightened emphasis on nationalism just as we were hoping for a greater measure of internationalism.

How is this planned economy to be effected, and what changes in the political power will be involved in effecting it? Several possible answers are suggested by the present world scene. There is the method of state capitalism, which prevails in Italy. There is the method of national socialism promised by Hitler. There is communism as embodied in Soviet Russia. There is socialization of industry and finance with democratic control, which is the ideal cherished by the British Labor Party. Will the transformations taking place in our own life work out according to one of these patterns, or will they take on some unique and characteristically American shape?

It is not my purpose to undertake any further analysis of our social complexities, or any forecast. I only wish to express the conviction that we are in the midst of a social transformation analogous to the great social changes which we see so clearly when we look back into history. For the theme of this discussion is: What is the task of theology in a time of rapid and fundamental social change?

Briefly stated, the task of theology to-day, as I conceive it, is to show the independence of the Christian religion as a source of truth and power and the relevance of this truth and power to the shaping of the new order. The independence of the Christian religion must be vindicated, as over against the play of secular sociological forces, in order that men again may come to know, in the midst of a time of confusion and depression, the unsearchable riches of Christ. The relevance of the Christian religion must be exhibited in order that men may know again the eternal purpose of God to bring all the principalities and powers of our social system into subjection under the feet of Christ.

In carrying out this task theology must free itself from two tendencies which have been vigorously asserting their counter-claims during the past decade—the tendencies, namely, to a thoroughgoing naturalism and to an extreme supernaturalism. The strength of the naturalistic tendency is that all scientific truth should *ipso facto* become a part of Christian truth. The fatal fallacy of a thoroughgoing naturalism is that it regards the aggregate of scientific laws, physical, biological, psychological, social—plus similar laws to be discovered—as the sum-total of truth. On this basis Christian experience becomes a matter of scientific adjustments only, and it loses its unique vision of truth, its apprehension of eternal values, and its ultimate sources of spiritual transformation, peace, and power.

The strength of a radical supernaturalism is that it asserts the independence of the Christian religion; but its weakness is that this independence is conceived in such a way as to destroy the relevance of Christianity to the task of shaping the new order. It sets the divine incarnation in Christ over against a conception of human nature as radically corrupt, and it isolates Christ's revelation and redemptive work from the processes of history. As a result Christianity's hope for mankind tends to be sheerly apocalyptic, and Christians are not summoned by their faith to creative work in human society.

But if theology is to avoid both a thoroughgoing naturalism and a radical supernaturalism, and is to interpret the Christian religion as an independent source of truth and power and at the same time as being relevant to the shaping of the new order, can we determine some of the principles according to which this task may be accomplished? Let us undertake to do this, in briefest fashion, in respect to three areas of theological thought, namely, the interpretation of the universe, the way of salvation, and the field of personal and social ethics.

1. First, then, let us consider the independence and the relevance of the Christian interpretation of the universe. The Christian religion interprets the universe as having as its Ground a Living Will eternally going forth to create Order, Beauty, Righteousness and Love. If such a statement expresses a basic biblical idea with accents derived from Greek and from modern thinking, it need be none the less Christian for that, since it belongs to the genius of Christianity to integrate with itself congruous elements from many sources.

This faith in a Living Divine Will as the Ground of the universe is a unique fruit of the Christian religion. It is not hostile nor alien to the interpretations of the universe in the other great religions; but it is different from those and is bound up with a different Way and Goal of life. Nor does this faith stand in isolation from the philosophy of nature and of history. If we are willing to undertake a philosophical synthesis to-day, I believe it will be found to support a faith in a Cosmic Purposeful Spirit. Yet the Christian religion yields a unique insight into the nature of that Spirit and the meaning of his purpose. It is through the Christian faith that we have our profoundest knowledge of the love of God and of his will to create a Kingdom of love among men.

The relevance of this interpretation of the universe to the shaping of

the new order would seem to be unmistakable. Nevertheless let us give especial attention to this point for a moment. An interpretation of the universe may appear at first thought to have significance only for meeting purely intellectual problems. Let me then take an illustration of the matter of relevance from our dominant human situation. Many of us have been reading the novel, *Little Man, What Now?* and have felt how poignantly true to life it is. We recall the central character as a man of the rank and file of society, and we are pretty complacent people if we feel that fundamentally he is very different from the rest of us. Indeed, we are bound to admire the honesty of sentiment and the essential integrity of this man, which he will not surrender. And he also has a fair measure of competence for life, since he becomes one of the more successful salesmen in a large department store in Berlin. But he is beaten about by the ruthless social forces of which hundreds of thousands of his fellowmen are victims, until he becomes one of the jobless, subsisting with his wife and baby on a pitifully inadequate dole in a borrowed hut among some allotment gardens, and being ordered off the sidewalk one night by the police as a shabby outcast. We leave him after he has crept back to the hut that night, with his self-respect resuscitated by the loyal devotion of his wife, but with no other source of hope in sight. So movingly is the story told that I wonder whether all who have read it do not find themselves longing to know what came next for Hans Pinneberg, and whether the flickering flame of his self-respect is still alive.

To my mind this story serves as a negative illustration of the point before us. If there is no purpose in the universe, if society is the sole source of any redemption for man, if we must take a purely naturalistic view of the whole human situation, then is not the ultimate fate of the masses of men to be tossed about by a great maelstrom of blind social forces, which if it could speak would be saying to each, "Little Man, what now?"

And let us not be half-consciously saying to ourselves that this story concerns Germany and that with America it is bound to be different; and moreover, that we ourselves have secured a better footing in society and shall not thus be overborne. For the situations are not very far behind us, and may recur again, when a realistic cynic might be able to portray any of our men of power caught in the grip of economic upheaval and listening to a mocking call, as from some lurking Mephistopheles, "Little Man, what now?"

Clearly, in a day like ours one need not spend time in arguing for the relevance of the Christian faith in a Living Divine Will to the task of shaping the new order. If a blind play of sociological forces, naturalistically conceived, is the last word about the human situation, there is scant hope for a new order which will be better than the old. But if we enter into possession of the profoundest insight and experience of the Christian faith we shall know the reality of a Creative and Redemptive Spirit, mightier than merely human social forces and deeper than what we call the order of nature, in the strength of whom men may face our morally chaotic time as sons of God and as builders of the Community of Love.

2. It is characteristic of the Christian interpretation of the universe that it finds its most significant unfolding in connection with our other two topics. Let us, then, turn immediately to our second topic: the independence of the Christian way of salvation and its relevance to the shaping of the new order.

It is at this point that, in my judgment, there is perhaps the greatest need for constructive theological thinking to-day. For there is a tendency to present the independence of the Christian way of salvation in such a manner as to leave its relevance very obscure; whereas the methods of developing the relevance of the Christian way have often endangered its independence.

The greatest stress on the independence of the Christian way of salvation is being laid by the school of Karl Barth. This school swings back from the tendency in the theology of Ritschl and Harnack to make the teachings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels central and controlling in the Christian way. One result of this tendency, it holds, was to reduce the figure of Jesus from that of a Divine Incarnation to that of a "modern liberal citizen." Thus the absoluteness which belongs to the Incarnate Divine Word was lost. The School of Barth also reacts strongly against the tendency in modern religious thought, reaching back to Schleiermacher, which gives a normative place to the doctrines of the immanence of God and the dignity of man. It protests that this tendency sacrifices the essentially supernatural character of Christianity to modern romantic and naturalistic ideas.

Over against these tendencies of modern liberalism the School of Barth places the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, interpreted by the conceptions of the transcendence and sovereignty of God, the helpless-

ness and corruption of human nature because of sin, and the incarnation of divine truth and grace absolutely and once for all in Christ.

Now the impact of the Barthian movement on theological thinking derives its most obvious force through the justifiability of its protests. We stood in need of a more penetrating sense of sin in our modern Christianity. We were putting too much faith in processes immanent in nature and history as being normative revelations of God and were losing sight of the transcendent character of the Christian revelation. We had a doctrine of human freedom which obscured our dependence on divine grace. Christian thinking had become relevant to social tasks in the sense of being completely this-worldly, but it had become so far world-accepting that its independence was endangered. For example, Ritschl, in avoiding pietistic asceticism, interpreted Christian experience in terms of each man's ethical vocation. But his conception of an ethical vocation fell almost completely within the framework of the existing political state and economic order.

Any effort to express the independence of Christianity in such a way as to manifest also its relevance to the shaping of the new order must beware of two dangers involved in the movement to radical supernaturalism. The one danger is that the recovered and heightened sense of human sin shall be applied to human nature in the abstract—or to human nature conceived biologically or metaphysically—instead of penetrating to those seats of human sinfulness in the social forces which pervert human character. We must not allow the sense of sin to be merged with man's sense of finiteness or with his possession of a biological equipment. The most grievous sinfulness is bound up with the things that become "second nature" to us—to use a popular expression. We do, indeed, sin blindly and unwittingly as well as consciously, and it is these sins which often work the greatest havoc. But these sins spring chiefly from the warps and twists which we so quickly acquire from the unreasoning, blind customs of society. Our power of moral judgment does indeed become corrupted, mainly because we passionately adhere to the codes of our group or class which violate the wider common good. If we are truly to have a more searching sense of sin it must be one that lays bare the real sources of human injustice and woe by which the springs of our life are polluted.

The other danger to which I alluded has to do with our apprehension of the origins of Christianity. It arises when we set over against each other the ethics of Jesus and the theology of Paul. The great Pauline doctrines

of justification by faith, of divine grace, of union with the living Christ, of the life-giving Spirit should be interpreted in the light of the apostle's conviction that the Christian is to have the mind of Christ. But how are we to have the mind of Christ without making central the ethics of Jesus as we find it in the Synoptic Gospels? And how are we to comprehend the ethics of Jesus in its radical meaning, its scope and its power apart from his consciousness of God as calling men into sonship, and except as we find that consciousness continued in the Pauline doctrine of the life-giving Spirit who is able to transform men into new creations? The Christian experience in its fullness must always unite a profound consciousness of divine grace, a living sense of communion with the Spirit of God which makes us sharers in the mind of Christ, and a going forth of fresh energy in creative moral living.

It is, then, by a more searching moral judgment, which penetrates to the sources of sinfulness in our collective as well as our individual life, and by a recovery of the redemptive message of the gospel in its wholeness, that the unique and supreme significance of the Christian way of salvation and its relevance to the shaping of the new order may be freshly apprehended.

3. We come now to the independence and the relevance of the Christian religion in the field of personal and social ethics. This topic has been anticipated to a degree, but certain of its aspects require more explicit statement.

An outstanding fact in regard to modern life is that great areas of it have almost universally been held to be withdrawn from the sphere of Christian ethics. As Professor William Adams Brown has written in his essay in *Contemporary American Theology*: "Whether we consider industry or business or politics, the assumption has everywhere been made that enlightened self-interest is the highest law." (*Second Series*, p. 81.) Of course, this universal assumption was not held to imply that a Christian man could not engage in politics or business. The ideal of a Christian statesman or a Christian business man was regarded as practicable and binding, even though very difficult. What this assumption did imply was, that just as the laws of physics or physiology are largely independent of our moral purposes, so in business, industry, and politics this maxim of self-interest must be accepted as a quasi-natural law. Certainly no corporation could act otherwise than in the interests of its members, and governments must

always make national interests supreme. Governments, moreover, must protect corporations as though they were persons, for that is what they are in the eyes of the law. Thus the whole vast area of competitive business and industry and of national policy has been held to be subject to psychological, sociological, and economic laws having much the same status as laws of nature, and to this area of life Christian ethics could not directly apply.

Orthodox doctrines with regard to our economic and political life have often been felt by Christian men in business and politics to involve a painful dualism from which they would gladly escape. Now these doctrines have lost their supposedly scientific support. They are proving to be totally inapplicable to our post-war social confusion and to the problems of the technical revolution. That is the basic reason why the Western world is moving away from a mainly individualistic, *laissez-faire* social philosophy to some form of collectivism. Indeed, I have heard citizens of Italy and of Germany in the last few months argue for the dictatorships in those lands on the ground that only so can the common good be effectively served. Before Mussolini came into power, it was said, no one was thinking for the State or the good of the world. And in Germany, "Not *Eigennutz* but *Gemeinnutz*" is one of Hitler's maxims—"Not self-interest but the interest of the whole."

But if we believe that dictatorships, with their *Realpolitik*, their philosophy of power, and their ruthlessness toward the individual, are treacherous methods of seeking the common good, what methods shall we adopt, and what ideals shall govern us in adopting them? Evidently neither the methods of individualism nor those of collectivism as such can be relied upon to solve the terrifically difficult problems of our times apart from fundamental ethical ideals which have a clear bearing on those problems. But what is all too likely to prevail is a mood of reformism which will impel us to act in merely opportunist fashion, and which will be quickly spent if we can get a substantial measure of relief from our worst troubles. This spirit of opportunist reformism is what the relativistic ethics so prevalent in our day tends to foster. If we expect our industrial society to generate its own ideals, and if we have to wait for dilemmas and deadlocks in order to get those ideals defined, the new order will shape our ideals instead of our ideals shaping the new order. Thus there is real danger that we shall be shut up to the alternative between a temporizing reformism, which

postpones basic problems, and a swing to fascism and the method of dictatorship.

Clearly this is a time which calls for a fresh bringing home to the public mind of Christian ethical principles in their independence and their relevance to the shaping of the new order. For Christianity possesses the needed principles. It belongs to the inner logic of the Christian faith that the human individual, who has infinite worth in the sight of God, should also have intrinsic and ultimate worth in the sight of men. It belongs to this same inner logic that our collective life should not be organized on the basis of competition and the struggle for power, but on the basis of mutual-ity and service. And again it belongs to this logic that nations and races have no right to be laws unto themselves and ruthless competitors with each other, but are morally bound to become partners in a co-operative world-order.

Perhaps, indeed, there are few among us who fail to see that far-reaching consequences for the salvation of human society would follow from the application of these principles to the areas from which they have been withheld—those of business, industry, and politics. But still we hesitate and demur, wondering whether after all such an application is really practicable. To this hesitation a sufficient answer is that other eras have seen a similar application made with powerful effectiveness. We are too prone to forget that the Protestant Christianity of which we are heirs not only taught the doctrines of justification by faith and the priesthood of all believers, but also fired many with ardent zeal for the building of Christian commonwealths. The issues involved in the struggles of those times were not indeed precisely our issues. They were the issues of religious and political liberty; they involved throwing off the oppressions of ecclesiastical privilege and a landed aristocracy; and they were concerned with the rise of what we now call the middle classes. But Christian ideals were central to those great social changes, to the results of which we of to-day are so deeply indebted.

The task of building Christian commonwealths has been too long suspended and must be resumed. But behind this task of social rebuilding we need a religious passion and the disinterested, whole-hearted devotion of men who have learned unselfishness from Christ. There is a statue on the Thames embankment in the Whitehall section of London which impressed me greatly because it signalized the world-changing power of Protestant

Christianity at the beginning of the modern era. It is a statue of William Tyndale, to whom, more than to anyone else, the greatness of our English Bible as a classic of religion and of literature is due. Tyndale's English Bible could not be printed in England, and even on the Continent he had to flee from city to city, and in the end he was martyred. The inscription on the base of his statue gives one of his last utterances—I quote it only from memory—"Lord, Make the King of England to see the light." And a tablet records within how brief a period after his death the English Bible was to be found in every parish church in the land.

Perhaps no force was more potent in the achieving of England's liberties and her democratic ideals and institutions than William Tyndale and the translation of the Bible which he made amidst the fires of persecution. And yet Tyndale was but one man of genius in a great Christian movement.

Ours is also an eventful time, full of social stress. Service in the cause of the Christian gospel is likely to involve greater difficulties and a severer trying of soul than for generations past. All who would serve loyally in this cause have need to apprehend the full meaning of the Christian faith in God, the Christian way of salvation, and the Christian ethics for the individual and for society, in order that they may go forth, with the spirit of the great apostle, to be ambassadors of Christ . . . "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing all things."

The Preaching of Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen

E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN

INTRODUCTION

I

THE person who reads this title may be led to ask, "Why does the writer fail to mention the names of Professors H. Emil Brunner of Zurich, Friedrich Gogarten of Breslau, and R. Bultmann of Marburg? Why does he single out only two men of the movement known as the Crisis Theology?"

In reply we offer a number of reasons. First, this article is based largely upon the volume of sermons entitled *Come, Holy Spirit*, recently translated from the German, and which is a collaboration of Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen. There is another volume of sermons jointly written by the same authors entitled *Suchet Gott*, which has not been translated. The first-mentioned volume is the first translation of sermons to appear in English. All other translations have been of theological works, although Barth's *Roemerbrief*, also recently translated, contains much material he preached while still a pastor in Switzerland. For that reason the volume is dynamic and explosive, both in style and content.

Another reason for the restriction of names in this article is that Barth and Thurneysen have not merely sought to make their impact theoretical or academic. It is of greatest importance that they have not merely concerned themselves with the deeper problems of theology, but have seen the necessity of paying attention to the practical functioning of theology in a preaching message. Much of modern theology fails here. It cannot be preached.

Pastor Thurneysen has remained in the pastorate *by choice* and sought to effect this new theological emphasis in his great Muenster Church in Basle. Professor Barth still possesses a deep love for the average parishioner. He is a fierce democrat; he abhors the pedant. Like Luther, he has suspicious distrust for mere Erasmian scholastic dogmatism. Barth is eagerly heard by groups of preachers and laymen, and, in spite of his

profession as a professor, he has more of the air of a preacher than a dry intellectual. This probably accounts for his frank attitude of zealous and passionate faith, which many have misunderstood for dogmatism. Barth's theology is not of the types of Brunner, Gogarten, or Bultmann. It is more living; it is Pauline, prophetic. It is a preaching theology. (It is no wonder that Barth should love Paul's letter to the Romans, as did Luther, Calvin and Augustine. That letter is not a treatise on systematic theology, but on living theology—it is full of life's paradoxes—and paradoxes are taboo to the logical systematic.) Barth aims at consistency of life and reality, not consistency of logic and system. For this reason Barth and Thurneysen are classed together.

Closely related to this is the fact that the other members of the Crisis Theology group have not produced volumes of sermons. They have been more interested in academic subjects, although Brunner conducts a class in homiletical exercises in the University of Zurich, which the writer on a recent visit found stimulating. But Brunner is more of a systematic theologian, whose tendency to crystallize has irked Barth. Barth does not wish to formalize his thought, to create a new theological system. To formalize theology always relates it too closely to natural philosophy, he thinks.

Barth and Thurneysen have maintained that real theology must be living, "interim" theology, and never final, dogmatic or static. They would regard it as a tragedy if theology became a scientifically verifiable discipline. The living spark of religion is kindled in the critical meeting of man and God, and thus it must always be livid, challenging, dramatic, moving, dynamic, a matter of faith and not proof. Living theology lives only in inconsistency, in paradox. Barth learned this during his pastorate of over ten years. For Barth is not a trained academician, as is Brunner and the others, who were professors from the beginning. Barth faced the problem: how could he speak about God to his people, the living God, not the philosophical absolute, but the high, holy, righteous, biblical God? His problem was different from that of the academic theologian. Barth has often spoken of the marvel that he, who has never taken a theological degree, should be the one to create such a stir in the theological world. This, perhaps, explains what we are driving at. His theological doctorate was presented him by Glasgow. It is for this reason that Barth and Thurneysen cannot be put in a class with their comrades. Barth and Thurneysen have quite different approaches to the Christian religion, and in a

real sense these two preserve the original freshness and dynamic of the movement. Brunner, through a recent book, has attempted to reconcile Christianity to the God-given orders in nature. This, says Barth, is a defection from the radicality of the Christian revelation, which simply cannot be harmonized with natural orders. To do so is to end in a consistent philosophical theology, but a diluted Christianity, which cuts counter to the original impact of his thought. For Barth and Thurneysen, Christianity is a religion of revelation. It does not issue out of resident causes within nature. Christianity is a religion of redemption, of the future, of what will be. It is radical in nature, and any attempt to adjust it in the fashion of Aquinas' continuity principle makes it a mere philosophy, and softens its novel nature. Christianity then loses its sense of urgency, its crisis, its challenge, its cross, its heaven, its fire, its demand for faith and not proof! It loses its preaching message. It loses its very nature. Brunner, by his attempt to relate the gospel to nature, falls into the old pit of orthodoxy, intellectual monism! In the end, Christianity then will be adjusted to races, to nations, to the past, and will inevitably lead to a natural religion of rational consistency—a religion without faith. And rational religion leaves no room for faith.

Bultmann and Gogarten have already done this devastating adjusting by becoming mild "German Christians." By doing so they have softened the rift between nature and gospel. They have made a place for the godless, immoral state alongside, yes IN, the absolute gospel. And Brunner, by his adherence to the "Oxford Group" movement, has further compromised that gospel with human experience and has thereby opened the door whereby the whole radical gospel of God in Christ can harmlessly enter the theological scene through the libido of human psychic states.

In the light of these wide differences, it is not surprising that the journal published by the group under the title *Zwischen den Zeiten* was recently discontinued, largely because Barth and Thurneysen refused to compromise the gospel with anything that smacked of nationalism, human mysticism, or scholastic dogmatism. This again indicates that Barth is still the preacher, the caller, the Jeremiah. Only the scholar knows the fine art (?) of compromise. But never the prophet! His strength, as always, is due to that dynamic dogmatism about the uniqueness and absoluteness of Jesus Christ, who needs no natural or human support to give men God or to prove his ultimate reality.

Barth is a *voice*! He is more a prophet than a theologian, and wants to be known as such. For this reason he has been misunderstood, especially in America. Men have wrongly approached him when they have done so from a scientific or logical position. Barth can be approached only through his sermons and his preaching mind. Barth has come to his position of faith largely through a "broken spirit," and anguish that cost dearly. Theologians, as such, know little of that. This is also the experience of Thurneysen.

Barth and Thurneysen write with such unity of spirit and outlook that the twenty-five sermons in the above-mentioned volume do not betray, except, perhaps, through their style, and then only to the expert student, which author wrote which sermon. This was done, as Barth says, so that the Great Subject and its content might not suffer at the hands of human composers. Objective truth must not be manipulated. It might be of interest for American readers to know that when a translated volume of sermons was first considered, it was hoped it might contain sermons from the pens of perhaps five members of the Crisis Theology group. But Barth begged off, with the statement that he did not care to be misconstrued with other members of the Crisis Group. So deep had the chasm grown even then.

This chasm, however, has not been created merely by differences of intellectual opinion. It results from Barth's uncompromising conviction that natural philosophy can never produce Jesus Christ, that salvation involves deep, passionate spiritual struggle, and that any attempt to dilute that God-given gospel is a wedge whereby the uniqueness of Christ will eventually be naturalized, humanized, and finally controlled by human systems, whether of dogmatism, mysticism or ethicalism. The superficial student may think that the difference is very slight, but to one who knows Barth and Thurneysen, the struggles through which they have passed, as well as the deeper issues involved, Barth's contention is very real. This uncompromising attitude on Christ and God is perhaps the key to the strength of Barthian preaching—and all *real preaching*.

II

What is preaching in the Barthian sense?

Perhaps a better approach would be to face the statement: What preaching is not. Preaching is not a discourse on the relation of science to

religion, nor is it an attempt to reconcile these irreconcilables. It is not a discourse on theology, nor on sociology, nor on political economy nor on psychic states. Nor is it a discourse on morals or ethics! Preaching should not seek to make people respectable. It is not scolding. It is not the superficial treatment of a contemporary subject by one who does not even possess expert knowledge about the problem's elemental nature. It is not a discussion on biblical criticism. And it certainly is not speaking about a noble subject, which may have the nominal title to being a biblical sermon because it possess a precarious and arbitrarily chosen text. Preaching is not even a *religious* discussion. It is not lecturing. It is not argument about the existence of God, nor the deity of Jesus, nor the divine nature of the Bible. It is not a discussion about great doctrines as such. It is not a textually supported argument for the collection of more dollars for the budget; nor is it a polished argument why men should join the church. In the sermon "The Freedom of the Word of God," this subject of the use of the word of God for our own ends is treated with clarity. A sermon is never the *utilizing* of the Word of God for *human* ends. That is really blasphemy. It takes the name of God into camp for human ends. It makes God a butler, a servant, when he is Lord and Master. That Word must not be merchandised. It cannot be used and bought and sold. It is forceful only when it has a chance to use people. Preaching is not even an attempt to interest people in God for institutional Christianity. It seeks only to be true to its task and to itself. These, then, are the things preaching is not!

But what is preaching? It is proclamation, it is personal address! It does not deal with abstract truth, but with personal relations. It speaks of the I-and-Thou relation of God and man. Its burden is to speak about God without usurping the place of God himself. It is artistry of the highest sort. It seeks to point to something great and mighty, without standing in the way of the reality itself. It is witness. It tells, but never argues. It does not twist God to man's ideas. It speaks dogmatically, but never about trivial affairs over which men can disagree. It witnesses about Christ, who is the same always, and whom men instinctively recognize to be the Saviour. Preaching is attack upon man's innermost nature, it is a call to man's deepest self. It drives at that which is humanly elemental. It aims to answer man's deepest problem: that of his human existence. For men have but one urgent problem to ask, and that is the question about

God. Preaching addresses itself to this living and vital theological problem. It speaks of the "existential" problem of man, of that side of life which is capable of eternity.

Preaching is that address about God and man which deals with the ultimately real. Preaching is not a mere interpretation to a congregation of man's quest after God. It is more, it is the unbelievable proclamation that God has answered that quest in Christ Jesus and that if men will but believe, repent, be humble, teachable, childlike, they shall know and be blessed. The preacher is an ambassador of divine tidings, as Dr. Joseph Fort Newton says so well in the introductory chapter of *Come, Holy Spirit*. Preaching is selfless witness to God. The authority of the preacher does not rest in his own person, in his endowments of intellect or of soul. The authority is in the Reality of that about which he preaches. Real preaching is that in which the preacher is so certain of his subject that he brooks no contradiction. The Pentecost sermon entitled "Come, Holy Spirit," in this volume, says that when Jesus Christ is really witnessed about, *all* people *understand*, regardless of race or nationality. But he must be proclaimed sincerely.

Preaching is witnessing about what God has done in Christ. Christ is central in humanity, and the distinctions between men break down when he is spoken of. All history revolves around him, because he is central to the essential nature of humanity. Much of our concern about how we should preach to varying age-groups would no longer be a problem if Christ were the central point of preaching.

But if preaching is witnessing, it means that the subject witnessed about must always remain sovereign. In the sermon entitled "He Himself," the writer opens with the familiar illustration from Lao Tse, which says that the use of a wagon wheel, with its spokes, rim and hub, is conditioned entirely by the hole in the center. Its usefulness would be nought were it not for that hole through which the axle is slipped. The same applies to speech about God. Our words must never be complete in themselves, our arguments never finished. There must always remain a vacuum, a blind spot, through which the invisible One can come, for around him (*he himself*), in all his transcendent reality, do our thoughts and words revolve, or they are useless. Preaching is like that. It is a sacrament in which the means are but instruments in the hands of Reality. The means must not usurp the place of the end. Such preaching is sacramental, for

through it God has an opportunity to come to men. The grace of preaching is determined only by the humility, and yet reckless objective dogmatism, of the preacher. It is said of Thurneysen that when he preaches he strikes the hearer as one who is thoroughly mastered by his subject.

Preaching, then, in the Barthian sense, presupposes a fixed point, a historical personage, an event of the first order in which something unique took place. Preaching must therefore be biblical, not necessarily using mere biblical words, but it must ring true to the original dynamic and life. The pulpit, then, is unique in the religions of the world. It is the place at which proclamation is made of news extraordinary, of an act of God done for men. It is the extension to all men of a hope, a message, a forgiveness, a life, a promise that is so majestic and yet so simple, that men have often despised it, either because it is too high to be true or too lowly to be respected.

In the face of this high and impossible standard of preaching, Barth acknowledges his utter helplessness. He also feels that God can speak even through poor preaching, and that the church would have been lost long since had he not done so. The best preparation for preaching is a broken spirit, a spirit of utter perplexity, a feeling that even the best preaching issues from preachers as unprofitable servants. Preaching, in any case, is a reckless daring to speak about God, not because one *wants* to speak about God but because he *must*! Driven by the imperative of obedience to the will of God the preacher takes his life in his hands and throws himself upon the love and mercy of God and preaches. He participates in the task called the "foolishness of preaching." He throws bread upon the waters, he cries in the wilderness.

This problem, says Walter Lowrie, is one that we in America have never even so much as thought of, namely, that we as preachers must preach the Word of God. How often, in our sermons, we drag God, or the Scriptures, in unceremoniously by the heels, usually to substantiate *our* own opinions! Besides, not seeing the grave problem involved in preaching, we often look askance at the suggestion of expository sermons. They may, of course, be intolerable to preacher and unconvincing to congregation—IF the preacher does not honestly expound what is *really said in the Bible*. Perhaps this is an indication how far modern Christianity has moved away from its source, says Doctor Lowrie. Perhaps such preaching would again confront Christian people with what genuine Christianity

really is. And it is found only in the Scriptures. At least, the preaching of Barth and Thurneysen shows what power lies in expository preaching, and that such preaching is not only possible, but that such preaching can generate power and touch on the vital issues of modern life. Its first introduction to the modern congregation, accustomed as many are to aimless topical sermons which are hardly distinguishable from "talks" on the lecture platform, might be bewildering. But eventually it will create a spirit born of the power which is unique in Christ Jesus, who is *the* head of the church. Perhaps this might be the salvation of the sermon (and the church) which to-day, in many cases at least, does not attempt to touch the deeper problems of existence, but merely harmlessly, if interestingly, to discuss questions about which parishioners might receive better answers from the psychologists, sociologists, or the economists.

As to the method of preaching, Barth and Thurneysen have little to say. As mentioned above, preaching must be biblical, but not bibliolatrinal! But biblical in that it rings true to the essential faith of the early Christian Church. Barth feels that if the sermon's burden really concerns God and life's "last things," life and death, the vague cravings of the congregation will respond. The message must not be hindered by the method. Even the humblest speech, if sincerely burdened with God's glory and love and mercy, can become a sacrament. "For instance," speaks the sermon entitled "He Himself," "there may be sermons that are brilliant, inspired, spiritual and resonant with piety, and yet they do not witness; on the contrary, it is possible to listen to simple, perhaps stammering and halting words issuing from homely lips about which we immediately feel that in them there is witness."

III

What are some of the dynamic traits of Barthian sermons? One faces in them the overwhelming *fact* of God, not a God who is a human idea, nor a God who is dualistically separated from the world, but *the* God whose the world is, and all that dwells therein. The very first sermon in the volume proclaims, with the word of Psalm 24, that the whole earth is God's. It speaks of the chaos and problems of our times. Our gospels are all too small, they touch only fragments of the world's life. But God, whose the world is, is the only Reality whose universal Word is encompassing enough to be sufficient for this day. (Every sermon must have that

universal setting.) But the truth, namely, that the world is God's, is not a truth that issues *from man*, it is a truth self-contained within itself and sovereign in its own right. It is true from God out. It is a *proclamation* to be *believed*, not a scientific fact to be demonstrated. God does not ask whether we understand him, but he asks us to *believe* him. Our trouble to-day is not due to the fact that there is no help for us, our difficulty is that there is no belief-ful willingness—repentance—to let God come in. We are still too critical, too self-sufficient. The gates of our life are not raised high enough, our small and selfish thinking is not *opened* wide enough. The necessity for humility has not gripped us, and because we desire rather to live in our narrow cells, we do not face life hopefully with the confidence that the earth is God's, and that he will bring things to fruition. There is world and social significance in such a sermon; there is preaching of humility; there is no argument about God, but rather a *proclamation* of his *faithfulness*. Man's doubt, born of his inherent desire to help and live only for himself, is the barrier that keeps God's world from being God's. While this sermon mentions our social problems, it plumbs down beneath them to the existential problem of man's essential nature. Two great facts constantly confront us in Barthian preaching: (a) the unconditioned (a philosophical word used by Tillich and, therefore, suspicioned by Barth) existence of God *in* the world, yet the God who is also always on the other side of all phenomena, and (b) the necessity for humility on man's part to be his true self and know God.

The sermon on "Repentance" was preached on the day of prayer for the Swiss Federation. Its text is the familiar, "Come unto me" It begins by saying that where Jesus stands is a place nearer to us than any other, simply because Jesus reaches us at the place where we are most at home. His call to "Come" is a call of mercy, for he wants to speak "God" to us. He wants to tell us that God *is*. There is a crisis, however, in his beckon. To *come* means that we must start toward him, realize *we need* something more than what our efforts can accomplish. *That* we do not like to do! Our egotism is too pronounced. Jesus wants to give us something which we think we have, but which we do not possess. If we go to him to receive something, we must first acknowledge that we have empty hands. That we do not like to admit. But to admit it—is repentance! "Jesus shatters us so that he may set us on a firm foundation." Then follows a severe indictment against the church for toning down these strong words

of Jesus, so that when the church says Jesus' words, in reality they MEAN something much less. The church has thus betrayed God too often. Does the church dare to witness that *we need to come to Jesus*? Or is she satisfied to tell men they can stay where they are and still follow Jesus? "If the church dare not empty the hands of men, then she cannot give them anything." If she cannot preach the gospel of no she cannot preach the gospel of yes. Yet, the call to come to Jesus resounds *despite* the church. For he is meant for *all* people. Then follows one of the simplest interpretations of Barthian Christology which is found in any of Barth's writings.

Jesus is different from other great men. His saviorhood rests in the fact that he does not appeal to men's intellect, emotion or will, but to that elemental stuff of humanity. Jesus attacks the entrenched positions of men, not from the position of the philosopher, nor the ethicist, nor the mystic. He attacks men from the rear, from the point at which they got into their sin and guilt—and he attacks them not with condemnation, but with forgiveness. He wants nothing from men, he wants them only for God. He attacks men from the side of God. His only complaint against men is that they have gone from God, and he holds out but one promise, namely, that God is faithful. This is something all men can accept without belittling or exalting themselves. We are urged to come to him just where we are and as we are. When a person lets Jesus tell him he is forgiven, he repents. He who admits he is belabored and heavy laden and comes, is repentant. Jesus does not desire to see us in our fitness, but in our everydayness. Jesus is known only by those who acknowledge they are sick and in need of a physician. But to acknowledge that is indeed difficult. Jesus does not disclose himself to us when we boast about our rights, only when we feel ashamed of our wrongs. We do not like that sort of a religion, because it grates against our pride. We like a religion that is *hard*, one that drives us to climb to heaven by our own efforts to bring Christ down. We like a religion of attack, advance. But when Jesus speaks, we are rather to act quite the opposite—we are to retreat and be still. "Faith begins with the insight that we have little faith." If the Day of Prayer were a day in which something heroic would be demanded of us, this preacher says it might be easier to celebrate it. But the greater heroism is that of humility. Such are the contents of the sermon on repentance, a theme which is rarely touched upon in modern pulpits, because the power

complex has infused into us the idea that religion is something to *do* instead of to *be*.

In another sermon, "Make Me Pure of Heart," we face a similar theme. It opens with a discussion of the crisis of our times. It speaks of the many plans offered for the betterment of the situation. And yet, after all is said and done, our much fussing apparently helps so little. It only indicates a high state of fever. And all the remedies applied by the physicians do not really *cure* the disease. Their methods are merely external. Health flows from a mysterious source which we have no power to create or make grow. The place where things become better is not a high place, but an abysmal depth. When we reach the spot where we really seek help, then help comes. God helps when men call upon him. But so long as they are satisfied with their own devices, so long will things grow worse. Our sin consists primarily in our own conceit whereby we refuse to allow ourselves to be helped. When we reach the place where the publican stood, when we feel ourselves wholly bereft, we shall see God. At the place where we see only death and ruin and disintegration, there we will see the new beginning, the new world of God. This sermon indicates that before we can become optimistic we must face a bitterer pessimism.

Perhaps the sermon which is most gripping and of most interest to intellectuals is the one entitled "Jesus and Nicodemus." It is a unique psychological treatise. Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night to engage in a religious "talk" about God. But Jesus has little time for such broad discussions. With one rude stroke he struck the cards and the finely charted intellectual positions from Nicodemus' hands. He finds himself face to face with something new, for Jesus does not *talk moderately* about religion, he throws the Jerusalem doctor of divinity into the stream of reality! The time for tolerance is past when men want to *really know* about God. Jesus shows himself again to be no pedantic teacher of religion, but one who realistically grips human beings and confronts them with the existential problem of life. Jesus made no attempt to compromise. Jesus was feared by the dogmatists of his day because of his freshness, his sharp, cutting words. He has no time for those who will not strike out into the deep in faith. He has no time for insincerity. He has especially no time for men who want to be confirmed in *their religious* opinions. Jesus has a way of being frank and uncompromising. But the truth of the matter is that Jesus was wounding Nicodemus as a *friend*. For the sharp ways of Jesus

are meant for the healing of men and not their destruction. Men like Nicodemus are standing as it were under the roof of their own opinions. Jesus had to take him away from his roof so he could see the reality of the Sun. Nicodemus was thinking only about *his* ideas, *his* problems, *his* needs. He wanted to *use* the authority of Jesus to confirm *his own* opinions. This Jesus never does! Jesus demands that *he* be the subject and *Nicodemus* the predicate. This makes Jesus unlike any other savior the world has ever seen. "You must be born again!" The reply was, "How can these things be?" Nicodemus asked the old academic question—he demanded *proof* for religion! There is no such thing as academic proof for the perception of spiritual things. They verify themselves to those who have ears to hear and a mind to obey. We follow Jesus not because we get something from him, but because we cannot help it, or explain why.

Perhaps the most keen psychological sermon of the volume is the one entitled "Jesus and Judas." It begins with the statement of Nietzsche, that "man is something that must be overcome." Jesus is the savior of man, because at the central point of man's ego, Jesus was thoroughly overcome by God. Therefore, Jesus has the power of God. Through man's complete ruin God saves men. The cross of Jesus is the supreme revelation of God, for there man and all that is human were conquered and sacrificed and given unto death—for God. Now, not only bad men are to be overcome, but good men as well. For often goodness is "babbitry" about which men boast as they boast about their superior possessions or gifts. Man has an ultimate citadel within him, in which his "I" lives. It is there that the essential man lives. That "I" must be stormed and overcome. All our battles around the citadel are of no permanent avail unless the citadel is conquered. Much of our social gospel efforts only affects the fringe of man, his habits, his moral garments and his customs. *Jesus aimed to conquer the citadel of man.* For that reason he has little to say about ethics, nor did he concern himself much with the question whether men were good or bad. He befriended harlots and publicans, and even dined with them. The supreme struggle between Jesus and Judas was whether Judas would hold possession of his "I," when he realized what Jesus was attempting to do. *Judas consciously aimed to hold his citadel against Jesus.* He is a type of all men. Judas was, perhaps, the strongest one of the disciples mentally. But Judas defended himself against Jesus, and with defiance and vigor as a man fights for his life. But Judas was to discover

that his position was fallible. He suffered a great disillusionment. What he thought was a secure foundation in his "I," gave way. He did not perceive that only when man gives himself up *totally*, and has *no foundation of his own*, that *there* he stands on the firmest foundation. He knew that Jesus was aiming at the overcoming of his "I." Judas, unfortunately, like many others, saw the cross only. He did not see Easter. He saw the blood, the NO; but he did not see the victory, the YES. How precarious is man's position when he softens the reality of the cross! Judas did not escape the great shake-up which he had hoped to avoid. Since Jesus has lived, every cherished position of man has been made precarious. In the battle of God with the human "I," the cross, that symbol of man's complete surrender to God, is, after all, the only hope for the security of man and society. In the cross we see that where we thought everything ended, just *there* everything worth while really begins. The translation of this sermon will ever be a searing memory to the author. In this sermon, perhaps, the uncanny power of Barthian preaching is most easily discovered.

As a final sample of Barthian preaching we must refer to "Jesus is Victor," which deals with the subject of the resurrection. Here the resurrection is treated as the key problem to the whole Christian faith. We must all die. That is the terrible verdict. And death is a terror! It stops us! It triumphs over every living thing. In the midst of life we are always facing our final end. There is no way out. No hope of the persistence of personality, no so-called proofs for immortality, no uncertain inferences based upon psychic research and the like will help here! *THESE PROVE NOTHING FINAL TO THE PERSON WHO IS DYING. Unless God really raises the dead we are hopeless, and all our preaching is vain mockery. Death closes a door the latch of which is not on our side of the door. "BUT God, who is rich in mercy, has made us alive." We balk at the words "We are dead." Man hates to acknowledge his helplessness. His self-sufficient pride is his sin—the narrow door which keeps him from the person God desires him to be. The new resurrection life is offered to all—the enigma of our foolish unbelief keeps us from realizing its fact in life. Jesus is victor!*

IV

Barthian sermons possess a uniqueness, power, drive, and vitality seldom found in American preaching. They drive with urgency at the heart of

the human problem. They call men to repent and listen. They create a sense of worship and belief-ful-ness, of hope and promise. They stimulate deep thought. They, in true biblical fashion, never seek to settle the peripheral problems of life; rather they aim positively to answer life's fundamental quest. Such preaching is like the crack of the horseman's whip, to use Kierkegaard's parable, which is not intended to drive the horse on, but to cause him to stand at attention and know his place and his master. Such preaching aims to raise men from the dead—not by the merits of style or oratory—but by the sheer witness it gives to the only Power that can raise men from the dead.

The preaching of Barth and Thurneysen may seem strange to us, but it rings true to the historic tradition of spiritual Christianity. A new and living theology must inevitably precede and return if vital theological thought in the American scene is to thrive. We must first come to grips with the elemental realities of life and society, and out of the fiery furnace of their exigencies forge a dynamic theology of God's and man's existence before we can speak of a revitalization of the churches. Most of the scientific, empirical and experimental theology promoted in our American centers of religious thought has not the slightest power to generate faith—on the contrary it stifles faith. And it cannot be preached. Perhaps we shall see a real theology emerge only out of pastorates where men, face-to-face with life's realities, and not theories, give birth to a new dynamic theology that shall defy the schools, or, as has often been the case, change our schools from dry and dusty scholastic adjustment stations of science and religion to flaming generators of infectious faith, that once more is concerned only about the fulcral realities—with Jesus Christ. Barth and Thurneysen cannot be understood by many American theologians, because they are not yet desperate enough about reality.

Before the conviction that Jesus Christ is the absolute savior can return, we will need to suffer more. Out of the sensitivity of crises and tensions between the world of God and the world of man, great preaching issues. It is native to those traveling the Damascus road. Preaching *will* return, but first of all the faith-filled *preacher* must return! Before the "foolishness of preaching" returns, we must see emerge a generation of preachers who possess a foolish faith, a faith not consistent with the rules of formal logic, but consistent with life's only and deepest reality: God.

The Climate of Religion

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

OF the extraordinary changes which are taking place in our world to-day we are all convinced, though it may be questioned whether any of us can realize the extent, not to say the significance of these events. Just now the economic and political changes are so absorbing that we hardly have time for other considerations. But the fact is that not one realm of human life and thought has been exempt from these transformations and the tempo of change in this last generation has steadily increased. The aim of this paper is to inquire what sort of climate this new world offers to religion.

There is a double conviction underlying this study. The Christian religion, which is our main concern here, has a certain absolute quality about it, not in the form of unchanging ideas and institutions, but in its conviction about God and its message from God. As such it stands over against the changing scene; it is more than an aspect of the endless flux. The question as to climate means, then, to what kind of a world of thought and life does this message from God come? But religion is also an immanent affair of life, as God is immanent. It not only brings the Eternal to time but it sees the Eternal in time. To consider the climate of religion, then, is not to think of a world apart from religion, whether viewed as hostile or friendly; it includes the effort to discern how the living God is moving and working in this changing world.

A survey like this will easily give the impression of being superficial and dogmatic. It can only plead the necessity that confronts religion to-day of seeing its world whole and trying to understand these changes which are as momentous for religion as for any other interest of man. The two halves of this paper will deal in turn with the double concern of religion as a faith and as a way of life.

THE WORLD OF THOUGHT AND THE CLIMATE FOR FAITH

In considering changing human thought as it bears upon faith to-day it is fitting that we turn first to science, the term being here used for natural science. For it has been in the name of science that men have ruled out

the thought of God. For the men of the last generation, the methods of science seemed so exact, so dependable, that it was easy to assume that there was no other method of knowing, and therefore no God since natural science did not reveal him. It was just as easy to assume that there was no other world except that with which science dealt, the world of sense perception. Science was possible only as there was order in the universe, and that order was quietly assumed to be a rigid sway of cause and effect operating mechanically. Science proceeded by analysis and by that method had reached the atom, which it conceived as material, indivisible, perdurable, unchanging. The world, therefore, was one of *Kraft* and *Stoff*, of energy and matter, and the world view was that of a block universe behaving like a great machine with no energy ever lost, with nothing new ever entering, with no freedom, no creativity, no soul, no God. Of course this was not science but philosophy, the philosophy of naturalism which took the necessary limitations of the scientific field, the necessary assumptions of science and its legitimate methods, and exalted them into a philosophy of what alone was real and what alone man could know.

In the relations of science and religion to-day the climate is definitely more favorable to religion. First, natural science is more clearly aware of the limitations of its field. It is an effort to find an orderly succession in the behavior of the physical universe and to describe that order, setting it forth in what it calls the laws of nature. Why nature should behave in just this way, what is back of this all in terms of ultimate reality or rational explanation, and what purpose may be working through it all, this it avowedly leaves to one side. So it leaves aside the significance of the individual and of the whole world of values. Its exactness and its fruitful practical applications are connected with this self-limitation.

Second, science is increasingly recognizing important matters outside its field, vital questions which it does not raise and cannot answer, realities which its instruments cannot reach. Here is the real significance of the long list of books and articles from men of science who are writing about religion and philosophy. It is not the conclusions of science which they bring, and the religious man who quotes Eddington or Jeans to show that science has now established religion speaks without warrant. These are simply the words of scientists who insist on being men and facing the questions which man must face. There is no agreement among these philosophizing scientists, and they usually are a good ways from traditional

theology. One may be a naturalistic mystic like Julian Huxley, another a theistic mystic like Eddington, while others may be philosophical idealists like Jeans and J. S. Haldane, or Platonists like Whitehead. The fact remains: they are all interested in an idealistic and, indeed, a religious world view, and they believe that there is room for such a world.

Yet though science as such can neither establish nor exclude a religious faith, the world picture it gives to-day becomes increasingly unfavorable to a merely mechanistic conception. Science is moved in its work by two considerations, one the interest in concrete facts and the open mind for all facts, the other the effort to bring all facts or events under the fewest and simplest formulæ of description. These interests may lead in opposite directions. The effort at simplification, or reduction, has led to the stress on the mechanistic principle. Its universal application would give the simplest possible picture of the world. It is still the principle which science properly uses as far as possible, and it has been notably extended in recent years in the field of biology. But the open-minded consideration of all the facts is also scientific. Those facts do not involve the giving up of the mechanistic principle, but they do require that it be used for exploration rather than for philosophical explanation, and that other principles or categories be used when necessary. And they do point toward another world picture than the mechanistic conception.

Some of the elements in this new world picture may here be suggested. (1) The new world is more and more conceived organically. To understand what is real you must look at the whole and not simply at parts; analysis is not enough. And the whole has a unity, a quality, a meaning, a way of behavior that is more than the sum of its parts. (2) The universe shows creativity. There is a real emergence in evolution, the appearance of what is new and qualitatively higher. (3) There is an element of purposiveness. You cannot describe the universe as we know it without terms that imply ends and movement toward ends. That is implied in the very idea of organism. (4) It is a place for freedom. The universe shows a certain free play. Its movement has at once that orderliness without which there could be no science or human control, and that freedom which involves significant possibilities and permits real change. There would seem to be excluded equally the old transcendent divine determination which settled all things from the beginning, and an immanent mechanistic determinism. There is in the organic world a certain

spontaneity and activity which indicate less a world of ready-made beings and more one in which there is a certain chance for self-achievement. And in the physical world, according to Heisenberg's teaching which Eddington elaborates, we have the principle of indeterminacy exemplified in the behavior of the electron. We are familiar with the idea of statistical averages in the social sciences, where mass behavior can be safely predicted without thought of determining the course of the individual. And this idea of statistical averages is the one which the physicist is now applying to his laws.

Such is the new world picture which is dispossessing the old mechanistic universe. It is a living and growing world. To use a recent phrase of the biologist, H. S. Jennings, we have "life that is upon a new adventure, life that is transforming into what did not before exist, life that is rising to heights not before reached." The picture certainly is more favorable to a religious world view. But the crucial question for religion remains: Is there here at work a conscious guiding purpose, a creative Good Will? Is there a God who is the source of the highest good that we know, its goal, and the assurance of attainment?

Broadly speaking, we may say that three answers are being given to this question. All three start with a realistic appreciation of this creative evolution, but the first finds its explanatory source on the lowest level, that of physics, the second in a principle taken from the organic plane, the third in the realm of the personal.

(1) The "new naturalism" recognizes the reality of the world of values and may even at times use the term God. But it is like the old naturalism in finding the sufficient ground and explanation of the world movement in the space-time world. The ideal values appear at the end, not at the beginning. "God" is not the source but a late emergent. The spiritual is not basic but incidental. And of course the spiritual is not final. The last word belongs to the laws of the physical universe; that means here the second law of thermo-dynamics, that is, the ultimate dissipation of energy and the heat-death in which the universe has run down and life and God and good have all disappeared.

(2) There is a "new idealism" which takes emergent, or creative, evolution as its point of departure, but believes that you cannot get something out of nothing. It finds its clue in the organic world and explains the growing universe as due to an organizing trend, a whole-making prin-

ciple, or a principle of concretion. But this position still leaves us with an impersonal principle or order or life force.

(3) There is a new theism. It seeks to be realistic, as the other movements are, but it asks that all facts of life be used. It refuses to find the world explanation at the lowest point, that of physics, or half-way along the road in the idea of the organic, but insists that the explanation of the whole must be found in the highest, and the highest is ethical and personal. But because it is realistic it recognizes the need of change in the traditional concept of God and his relation to the world, a change away from the old absolutisms and externalistic transcendence toward an immanent God, a God who creates in age-long struggle and pain.

One other aspect of the climate of thought must be referred to, and it is probably the place where the battle of faith will be fought out in the next few years. The field is that of history and psychology and the problem is that of that knowledge of God and certainty of God which Christianity claims. Nowhere have "the acids of modernity" eaten more deeply, bringing with them doubt and uncertainty or total loss of faith. The criticism for which Kant stood is in the background, but the modern approach is through history and psychology and these ideas are reaching great numbers untouched by philosophical criticism or discussions of science and religion. For the issue presented here is not the form of one religious doctrine or another, but whether or not the intelligent man can believe in God at all.

Historical relativism and psychological subjectivism are the crux of the matter. Our supposed religious knowledge, it is said, is incurably tainted by the subjective and relative. History shows us the crude origins of all our religious ideas, including that of God. Every such idea finds its explanation in its relation to its age, the stage of development, social conditions, and the like. Probing further, the psychologist would reduce religion to the fears and longings which have their explanation in the infancy of the race or the lingering infantilism of the individual.

Of course there are fallacies here which religion must discern and oppose. Not the origin but the goal at which they arrive is the test of ideas as of life. Not the idea of God alone but every idea is subjective; the crucial question is whether the subjective idea has relation to an objective world with which we have commerce. And as for the rôle of fear and longing in religion, where is there any knowing which is not somehow

connected with man's will to live, and so with his hopes and fears? But there is another side. May not this trying climate be the change that is required to bring a higher development for religious thought? Is it not a gain for high religion that the old absolutes are gone with their impossible claims and the unthinking submission which they demanded: the infallibilities of Bible and church and the certainties of rational demonstration? The necessary climate for religion is not in these, but rather in the world of spiritual reality, in the eternal God, who is still the real environment of man. The certainty that we may have of this God is that of faith, a faith that has seen the Highest and has answered him in obedience and trust. And it is not absolute knowledge that religion demands but a knowledge of the Absolute. It is not God imprisoned in our formulæ but a vision of the God who transcends our thought and life and yet speaks to us through them—through spiritual insights, our own or those of the great souls of the past, through mystical experience in some immediate awareness of the Holy, and through those moral ideals which come to us with appeal, assurance, and command. For this free religion of inner conviction and high command, a religion in which faith takes its central place, there is the same climate to-day as always.

THE CLIMATE FOR RELIGION IN THE WORLD OF LIFE

Religion is not only a faith but a way. That is true in a peculiar sense of a through and through ethical religion like Christianity. The heart of Christianity is found in the conviction that in the spirit of Christ we find at once the revelation of God in whom we trust and the way of life that we must follow. The test of any way of life is its answer to certain crucial questions: Where is your highest obedience? What is your supreme good? Upon what do you rely for its achievement? What is your attitude toward men? The Christian answer as to "the way" is clear. The supreme allegiance is God—not state, or church, or any other institution. The supreme good is not in things but in the world of the spirit, the rich and free life of the soul of man. The supreme trust is in spiritual forces, in truth, good will, righteousness, in a word, in the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. The basic attitude toward men is reverence and active good will. Opposed to all this is the way that we may call paganism, whether found in East or West. For it the supreme goods of life are material, the supreme power is physical, the final rule of conduct is self interest, and there is nothing holy

whether in the God before whom men should bow or in human life which men should revere and serve.

If we turn to the modern age, we must recognize some changes of climate favorable to the way of high religion. Humanism joined with the scientific temper to set free the spirit of man from ignorance, superstition, and merely external authority, and bade men have regard to human values. A growing humanitarianism made men more sensitive to suffering and oppression. More significant has been the movement which, for want of a better term, we may call democracy. It is much more than a theory of government, though that was its first expression. There is a distinct philosophy of life and human relations which may be called democracy: the regard for man as man, the insistence upon freedom in self-government and self-expression, the demand for justice, the recognition of social solidarity, the transcending of class and race and national divisions. Increasingly men have seen that its application must be made in industry and that ultranationalism and militarism are as dangerous to it as political autocracy. All this is congenial to Christianity and in large measure its creation.

Looking at the total scene, however, we cannot but feel that the climate for religion as a way of life as seen in the social world is more hostile than for many a year. It is not a question as to the amount of materialism and greed, of selfishness and cruelty, of prejudice and hatred in the world. It is rather this: Are the ruling ideals in social life and the dominant trends in social organization offering to-day increased help to religion, or opposition? Let me call attention to certain of these trends.

Secularism is a dominant attitude to-day. It rests on the conviction that the real world is the world we see and that the goods it offers are the highest gifts of life. It lives in a two-dimensional world. It is the direct contradiction of the religious way which brings the third dimension into life. Religion sees life in the light of the Eternal. It is not the easy way. To rightly see the unseen and to subject life to its rule demand the insight of the seer, the courage of faith, and a high mastery of the will.

Various influences have united to bring the extension of secularism in our day. First has come the enormous development of physical resources and material goods and comforts secured through the application of modern science in invention and industry. It fostered an age of comfort loving,

of pleasure seeking, of lust for possession, of strife for the power which came through wealth, and, as William James once pointed out, made the fear of poverty our great obsession. But it did more; it gave men a new sense of power and self-sufficiency over against the world. They were masters in their world, gods themselves, and they needed no help. If this mood has been shaken by economic disaster, the latter, curiously enough, has worked to further the secularistic temper in another way, for it has once more made men feel that the bread and butter problem is the great concern of life. Finally, naturalism has powerfully reinforced secularism by furnishing it a philosophy.

If secularism is the denial of religion, then the new nationalism is the emergence of a rival religion. If Luther was right in holding that man's God is found in that to which he gives his final obedience and from which he expects the highest help, then we have here a form of religion. For the new nationalism has a messianic side to it, as Italy and Germany show; to people in despair it brings a promise of salvation, and it has its deliverers, as witness the significant titles, *Il Duce* and *Der Führer*. Its claim is to absolute obedience without regard to religion or conscience or reason. It is the totalitarian state, demanding all-inclusive control; politics, industry, finance, education, recreation, art, and especially the shaping of the ideas and attitudes of youth and age through control of education and sources of information, all are claimed.

It is not easy to sketch the background of events which has made the new nationalism possible. Science, invention, machinery and industry brought an enormous material development and a new society of extraordinary complexity, a world with masses of people bound together by the closest physical and economic ties without having learned how to live together. The situation called for new social organization, political, economic, international. It was a challenge to religion to give men insights, attitudes, and motives for the task; to education to furnish the needed outlook and understanding; to democracy to supply an effective technique of change that should be free, orderly, and constructive; to statesmen and economists to furnish blue-prints and direct action. These agencies were unequal to the task and social institutions broke down, the World War and the present economic chaos being the outstanding signs. Into this situation the new nationalism entered, marked on the one hand by cynicism and the despair of helpless and hopeless peoples, on the other by a new

enthusiasm and almost mystical faith centering in the leader, in the people as a race group, and in the state.

Our concern is with the religious bearings of the new nationalism. That it makes an appeal to devotion and self-sacrifice appears in the response of youth, but as a whole it furnishes a climate definitely unfavorable to high religion. Its reliance is upon force and its spirit distinctly military. In its assumption of supreme and inclusive authority, the state takes the place of God and the church becomes ancillary to the state. In international matters its spirit is individualistic and selfish, in inter-racial relations it tends to pride, arrogance, intolerance, and contempt. It is distinctly secularistic; its chief concern is with material welfare and national glory and other values are subordinated or sacrificed. In such a climate religion has the alternative of giving up prestige and place and becoming a minority group opposed to the accepted social ideals, or of compromising its spirit and message.

It would be a great mistake to limit the influence of the new nationalism to the avowed fascist countries, though these have given the clearest formulation of its ideals. One may well ask whether any western country has escaped its influence. In our own country we have seen the development of superpatriotism which, in addition to its militaristic point of view, stands clearly for the central principle of a political authority with precedence over conscience and religion. "Benedict Arnolds of the constitution" is the choice term recently applied, according to report in a friendly journal, by one national leader of this group to individuals and organizations the head and front of whose offence seems to be the insistence upon the authority of moral ideals in relation to the state, particularly in the bearing on civil rights, economic justice, and war. We note, for example, the refusal of citizenship to men and women of highest character who declare that they must follow the dictates of conscience in the bearing of arms in possible future wars, and the judicial support given to a state educational institution which refused the rights of education to a student who followed the position taken by his church in its highest assembly. This is Cæsar against Christ as clearly as when the early Christians met death rather than perform the simple act of pouring out a little wine before a statue of the emperor.

In the new economic situation the state is everywhere moving rapidly toward increased functions and larger powers. The political liberal is

asking whether these powers will be the delegated and responsible authority of a democracy or the autocracy of some usurping dictator. Religion is inquiring whether the new state is to arrogate to itself an authority which belongs to God alone.

Communism, as it is actually working out in Russia, shows a close kinship with this new nationalism as well as radical differences. Its ideology is international and not national, in principle it is antimilitaristic. It is to be the rule of the proletariat and not that of the "leader" who takes the power because he can. It has a different conception of social justice and the economic life from that of the capitalistically inclined fascist state. Yet in practice it represents the national state as the economic unit, and it arrogates to itself absolute control of all life to a greater degree than has yet been found possible in Italy or Germany. It is aggressively secularistic. It depended upon force for its initiation and employs it for self-maintenance. It deplores militarism as interfering with its central task which is economic, but it is ruthless in the destruction of individual lives or of groups that would impede its plans, and it allows no human rights to stand in its way. It forms a climate distinctly unfavorable to religion. That does not mean simply the traditional religion of the Russian Church, but the religion for which human personality is sacred, for which freedom and faith are high goods, for which God is the supreme reality demanding highest loyalty and giving life its richest meaning. Russia represents secularism become an avowed state policy and supported in fact as a religion by methods of suppression and propaganda. On the other hand, in its concern for economic justice for the common man, its elimination of the competitive war in industry, its stress upon co-operation and devotion to the whole, and its hostility to racial and national narrowness, it is one with the spirit of the Christian way. That antireligious secularism must necessarily go with the economy of communism is by no means indicated. One thing is clear: communism and fascism are bidding for the devotion of a youth that has lost hope in the older agencies and finds a certain idealistic appeal in both. H. G. Wood, in his *Christianity and Communism*, speaks of the strength of the latter at Oxford, and the fall number of *The Student World* depicts the students of the Orient asking themselves: "Which shall we join, the red army or the white one?"

Two other elements in the social situation demand reference here though they do not need discussion. The one is militarism. The other

the economic order. As to the latter one must ask whether even yet we have realized how unfavorable to religion the conditions of our western economic life are. The competition which is a species of warfare, the motive of gain which is selfish and antisocial, the emphasis upon material possession and its possibilities for self-gratification and domination of others, the luxury and want which are equally harmful to the higher life, the haunting insecurity even where there is not poverty, all these demand an assessment in spiritual terms which they have not yet received. This is not the climate for high religion.

Militarism is the reliance upon physical compulsion as the ultimate power with which to secure desired national ends. It is both a creed and a code. Its creed is the belief that force is the final power in this world; it thus involves a denial of a spiritual-ethical God. Its code involves the disregard of mercy, justice, and truth, and the sanction of falsehood, hatred, cruelty, and murder. Such at least it has meant in practice. When war is on you might as well declare a moratorium for religion as for ethics. Most significant, however, is the almost universal attitude among rulers and peoples that the final basis of human security and the decisive argument in all differences must be the threat of force or its actual use.

Nor can we pass here the strong trend to-day among left-wing social idealists. Hitherto united in opposition to war and standing for civil liberties and the assurance of free association and discussion, they exhibit today a loss of faith in spiritual forces and the orderly methods of social change and, if not as demanding, at least as defending direct action and the appeal to violent coercion.

But there is more here than a loss of faith; the background is rather the ebb of spiritual life. The leaders of the "social gospel" have been trying to mobilize the spiritual forces of the church against war and for economic justice. But the forces are not there. The alternative is to create these spiritual forces or to have recourse to nonspiritual agencies. Jesus took the former way, though it meant temporary defeat; the left-wing idealists are pointing to the latter.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Our survey has shown us a world of deep-seated and all-inclusive change, climaxing the age that began with Renaissance, Reformation, and the rise of modern science, shaped by invention and industry, moving with

accelerating speed and profoundly changing the whole intellectual outlook and social life of our day.

The Christian faith finds itself in an age still dominantly naturalistic, but moving definitely away from the old materialistic-mechanistic world view. The gain for religion is coming as men recognize a living universe, a creative activity, and the reality of spiritual forces and ideal values.

The influences which are securing this gain are bringing necessary change in the religious view, away from the old absolutisms and externalism toward more valid conceptions of religion and religious knowledge and of God and his relation to the world. The newer science is suggesting a larger place for idealism: the newer religious thought must have a larger measure of realism.

Religion as a way of life finds itself in a hostile world, where social ideals and the institutions of society point away from the spirit of Christ. Nationalism, fascism, communism, capitalism, militarism, and the underlying secularism of spirit form this inimical climate. Where it has not compromised, Christianity finds itself at war with the world about it. But in this same social world are ideals and forces, largely the fruit of the Christian spirit, which are arrayed in conflict against what is unsocial and unchristian in our present order.

All this hostility is not new. Religion does not move along the way of what is obvious to thought, agreeable to self-interest, or inevitable in development. It is not the easy way. It comes with a condemnation, a challenge, a summons. It calls for repentance of mind and heart, and for a faith which means insight and surrender. Where it does not judge, it transcends. Why then should we expect a favorable climate? It is the business of religion to change the climate.

But the climate of religion includes something more than these adverse elements; it includes all that which has brought religion to birth, enabled it to outlive every crisis, and made it the supreme issue of this day. For the climate of religion means God, the whole world of spiritual forces that beat in upon the heart and conscience and mind. It means the deep needs of that creature who cannot live by bread alone. It means that basic order of the universe which makes ignorance and sin and selfishness self-defeating and works toward truth and justice and good will. The stars in their courses are still fighting against Sisera.

The Church and the Social Crisis

The Practical Approach

HARVIE BRANSCOMB

THAT we are in the midst of a social crisis of the first magnitude is evident to everyone who reads the newspapers. The ways in which our grandfathers lived and conducted their affairs have been changed with a rapidity which has left us in confusion and disorder. The fair in Chicago is called "A Century of Progress," but the transformation of everyday living which it attempts to portray has been more rapid than the phrase suggests. A lady who visited the predecessor of the fair, the one held in Chicago in 1893, startled me recently by remarking that the great feature of that first fair was the electric lights which were to be seen on all the buildings. Of the marvels of applied science, only the first beginnings were to be seen in that exhibition. In the brief period since, mechanical and electrical inventions have appeared in a steady stream to modify the form and mode of our life.

It has become possible to mass people together and to create cities of such size that no political and social patterns of previous days are adequate for their guidance. The out of the way towns and villages are now in touch with the knowledge and exposed to the vulgarities of the populous centers, and the experience and ripe wisdom of the village fathers no longer guide the younger generation. Expensive modern machinery has made possible mass production by organizations which are in many cases world-wide in scope; and the individual merchant and craftsman have been crowded to the wall. The automobile has made it possible for adult and youth to leave the familiar environment and to obtain in a few minutes an anonymity which their fathers rarely had to face. In an effort to meet the increasing problems, laws have been multiplied until now no ordinary citizen knows what they are, and criminals find it relatively easy to escape arrest and punishment. A war no different in principle from scores which had preceded it, could not in this new world be confined in its original area, but would spread over the entire world. It is no wonder that our economic, political and moral standards and methods are out of joint in this new age.

Nor is the breakup of the familiar world at an end—indeed the pace seems to be accelerating. The reconstruction of the underlying theories of space and matter made necessary by Einstein, the outstanding genius of the century, whom the militarists, incidentally, tried to bar from the country, is only just beginning. Any day now we may read in the newspapers of the discovery of a practical means of breaking up the atom and releasing its enormous stores of energy. What the new knowledge of the hitherto unsuspected cosmic rays which pour upon us from interstellar space may teach us, no one can say. And one can only see dimly the acute social problems which are being created by the new science of eugenics and the medical endeavors to discover a means of regulating the sex of offspring. The larger crisis in which we stand at this moment is no matter of a few months. Society is being modified in ways which we cannot see in advance. The old guide posts will serve no longer because the ground to be traversed is new. The present task is not to inherit the social and spiritual achievements of our fathers—in a real sense we must create them anew.

I

What part are the Christian Churches to play in this great reconstruction? There is one answer to that problem which can be disposed of in short order. It is that the Church has no direct concern with these social and political questions. Let the preacher stick to religion. The concern of the Church is with individual sin and repentance, prayer, worship and the hope of a world to come. This advice, oftentimes sincerely given by those who have suffered from the confusions of the present day and have sighed to find relief therefrom, is open to an obvious fallacy. What is the Christian life if its content is something other than the normal life of men and women? There are, to be sure, specifically religious activities which lie at the center of the Church's life. If the Christian life is not hallowed by worship and enriched by a knowledge of the great historical tradition of the Church, it will soon wither and die. But this is different from saying that religion is something apart from the vital concern of everyday life. The gifts of life, its activities, its duties, its pleasures, are not alternatives to the Christian life, but its material and its opportunity. If God is not to be found in the home, the school, the places of business, the hours of recreation, he has a very small part to play in the life of

modern men, and it will not matter much whether the Church survives or not.

Religion is not a segment or corner of life. It is the whole of life lived from a new center, with different objectives and values. The present crisis in which we are, involves the most important phases of modern life. If the Church has no message for these days, it will not be long before the handwriting on the wall will be so plain that no Daniel will be needed to translate the fatal words.

During the dark days of the bottom of the depression it was another voice, however, that was mostly heard. There was a clamor for the Church to assume the responsibility for the crisis and to set it right. According to this view the Church is obligated by its principles of love and brotherhood to plunge into the economic and political arena, to espouse this or that program of action and to pull the fat out of the fire. The difficulty with this short way with depressions is obvious. The problems of this modern day have become increasingly so technical and complicated that even the specialists are uncertain as to their proper solutions. Just before the World Economic Conference I listened to a discussion by one of the secretaries of the British Legation at Washington of some of the preparations for that ill-fated gathering. The burden of his theme was that the problems to be dealt with were so over the heads of the specialists who had been called in to handle them that at best the London Conference could only begin the search for a solution. Where is the Church which has the knowledge and insight to solve these complicated social problems? The leaders of the Church are chosen on other grounds, and while it must be admitted that some of them have shown considerable political skill at times, it is not as economic or sociological experts, but as men of spiritual vision that they have been selected. Just at present when a large number of our churches are staggering under overwhelming debts and when a number of church institutions have been compelled to default on their financial obligations, I am not impressed by the suggestion that the Church is an organization that can cure the economic ills of the nation. Nor is the case any different with the other major social and political problems. They are not to be solved by doctrinaire advice or merely by invoking the golden rule. They require technical experience and skills, and the Church is not organized to marshal this most effectively nor to conserve it into a continuing body of knowledge.

There is a second difficulty about this solution. The patterns of our

social conduct will have to be wrought out by a process of slow adjustment and modification as the factors of the problem change. The solutions to be adopted must be constantly adjusted to the changing social organism. President Roosevelt's figure of the quarterback who selects his plays as the game proceeds will not be forgotten soon. Now a church is a poor institution for this adjustment of means to the end. Its proposals, by the time they reach the rank and file of the membership, tend to harden into dogmas which then can be modified only with difficulty.

Thus we are confronted by a dilemma: The Christian cause has a vital interest in the reconstruction of society, and yet her very nature as a spiritual and ethical society disqualifies her as the agent by which the reconstruction can best be accomplished. What, then, can the Church do as it faces this present crisis? It cannot deny the seriousness of the times. It cannot ignore it, for the very nature of the future society and the character of the men and women who compose it are being wrought out in these birth pangs of the new order.

II

The contribution which the Church has to make in the present crisis is a unique one which derives from her own genius and nature. It is not merely to duplicate the activities or contributions of other institutions or agencies. Her task is to contribute the spiritual or religious factors involved in any worthwhile and permanent reconstruction. These spiritual factors are primarily two: to reinforce and supply the faith necessary to carry through any great undertaking in the affairs of men, and to supply the spiritual standard by which the activities and objectives of contemporary society can be judged and evaluated.

I hurry past the first of these two because it is a matter on which everybody is more or less agreed. It is none the less vital. There were high hopes and ideals when this republic was first established, but they have mostly evaporated. The great task of the day is to recover the vision which has been lost and confidence that the future is worth the sacrifice and struggle necessary to achieve it. The Christian Church is founded on faith, faith in God who moves sometimes mysteriously his wonders to perform, but nevertheless performs them. In its long history the Church has seen many crises both great and small, and in each case a fresher and in some, if not all respects, a fairer life has been achieved. It

ought to have a message for times like these. One listens and waits for the voice of the prophets, the dreamers, the poets of the Church. Certainly the future will be better than the past. Modern society has been on the wrong track in many respects, and this crisis is the winnowing of God to clear out the chaff and stubble.

The second contribution is no less vital. The acute need of the times is for a spiritual standard by which processes and activities can be judged. At present there are three standards which are constantly appealed to, but none of them are sound or Christian. There is the belief, accepted unquestioningly by many Americans, that all things are to be measured by possessions. Men therefore are to spend their lives in the primary endeavor to make money. International affairs are determined by economic policy. Public morals are decided on the basis of taxation and monetary income. There is also current a naturalistic philosophy which regards men simply as bundles of instinctive desires, and questions are settled by whether human nature in the raw wants or desires the thing under consideration. A third philosophy lurking in the background of American life and already dominant in certain sections of Europe is the doctrine, "My country right or wrong." Honor, truth, the individual and all his hopes, are sacrificed on the altar of a pagan nationalism, which usually ends by drawing the sword and perishing by the sword.

Here is the supreme opportunity of the Church. Man is not merely the owner of property, nor a bundle of separate instincts, nor the tool of the state. He has a body that is kin to those of the animal kingdom, but his true and essential nature is spiritual. His spiritual nature is that psychic unity or mind or soul, in which work and love and public service and the memory of past deeds and imagination and purpose are all fused together in a self that is an enduring whole. Nor can this spiritual self be limited in its outlook or interest to any local group or section without loss. The destiny of man is to appropriate that divine life which, by God's grace, may be realized in human experience. Whether contemporary activities are good is to be determined by their effect on that spiritual unity or whole of life. That is the mistake of the pagan movies of the present day, which suggest that the imperious demands of sex may be satisfied quite apart from their relation to the rest of life. That is the sin of slavery to the Almighty Dollar, which reduces life to the level of the adding machine.

That is the sin of racial and national prejudices which restrict the life of the soul to a part of the whole things. To know all and to love all—that is the Christian ideal for man, because it is the life and the gift of God.

III

How can this ideal be brought to bear on the tangled affairs of to-day? In the first place, Christian people must know the ideal, and in the second place, they must appraise contemporary society in the light of it. The second of these is the crux of the problem. All over the Church Christian people ought to be carefully and eagerly studying and discussing the various aspects of contemporary society in their relation to the Christian ideal.

This is a program of Christian education. It must be carried on by the pulpit, in Bible classes, in classes for young people, in adult groups of varying sorts, and in the colleges of the Church. Never was there such a need for some sort of guidance on the part of sincere Christian people. It is the obligation and the opportunity of the church. Most of the churches have already made a start in this direction. There are well organized programs of Christian education in all of the Protestant bodies. Thus far the work has been confined primarily to the specific problems of the church and its own life—the study of the Bible, of missions, of religious education. The time has come when the scope of this must be extended to include all those aspects of modern society which relate themselves to the Christian ideal. It is the only alternative to ignoring them completely.

But if such a program is to have any long continuing value or usefulness it must be genuinely educational in spirit. That is, it must endeavor to get men and women to think for themselves in the light of the Christian ideal rather than to hand down to them a set of specific solutions to current problems. It must never be forgotten that we are living in a world where it is often difficult to be sure what is the wisest course of action. There is a clear difference between principle and policy, between the end to be sought and the means. In the former realm the church speaks with the authority of twenty centuries of spiritual history and that revelation of God's will which is to be found in the New Testament. In the latter sphere the church, like St. Paul when he gave advice to his converts on getting married, has no revelation from the Lord. To bring men to test and guide their actions by the spirit of Christ within has always been the Protestant in contrast to the Catholic method. We do not need a program or plat-

form sent down from headquarters to be put over in every local church. To do that would be to make the church a political party. I have observed in British and American history that political parties generally die out about every fifty or seventy-five years.

This educational spirit is not a new thing in church life. The educational divisions of several Protestant bodies have endeavored to express it for some time. Occasionally I am invited after due examination and long withheld certification to teach in the adult educational program of one of the churches. I have learned that this particular board carefully scrutinizes the papers and reports of its instructors. One of the points they watch is whether those of us who teach regard these classes as occasions for indoctrinating the students with our own ideas or whether we endeavor to make them think for themselves. If this principle of self-responsibility and inner direction is needed in the more formal religious instruction, surely it is wise in the study of contemporary social issues.

An illustration will make this point clearer. In the light of the repeal of the Prohibition Amendment we are facing a time of considerable difficulty in regard to this great reform. There is no difficulty or uncertainty for Christian people over the principle of temperance or of state regulation of the evil of drink. But Christian men and women will certainly differ as to the specific mode by which in the next few years we can most wisely meet the situation. Now it seems clear that the church must redouble its educational activities in connection with the temperance cause. Liquor advertisements and claims must be met by a study of the facts. But room must be left for good men to differ in the application of these principles and knowledge in political ways. It would be a great mistake, and a path from which the church sooner or later must turn back with regret, if men who wholeheartedly and sincerely accepted the principles of the church, but differed as to the political program by which these were to be achieved, were read out of the church or placed under a bar of suspicion.

One need not fear that this principle of freedom in the application of Christianity to contemporary social problems will destroy the corporate strength and power of the church. No one can reasonably doubt that out of such common study and discussion as has been suggested there will develop Christian attitudes and points of view which will make themselves felt in times of decision.

IV

Such a program of adult education on contemporary issues is a crying need of the country, quite apart from its specifically religious aspects. The adult education movement in this country has not made much headway. Apart from an admirable campaign against illiteracy it seems to have exhausted itself in a few courses in literature, æsthetic dancing, and some occupational instruction. No serious attempt at educating or guiding the adult masses, the actual rulers of the American democracy, in the problems which they must face and decide, has as yet been made. A hundred and fifty years ago the churches were the leaders in founding colleges and beginning the work of national education. May not the churches again contribute the leadership in a new program of adult education which will carry on throughout life the training for citizenship which the public schools everywhere are trying to give.

The main object of such a program, however, will be the vitalizing and actualizing of the Christian ideal in the life of the individual church member and of society. At present this ideal is stated vaguely or in fine generalities from the pulpit, and left to the individual in the pew to apply. The result, speaking generally, is that it is not applied to any very striking degree, and the charge that there is little difference discernible between the weekday behavior of church members and non-church members contains a large amount of truth. The individual needs more help than has been given him, though in Protestant religion his own conscience will always remain the final arbiter of where his duty lies. The Christian ideal needs to be brought very definitely into relation with such practical week-day issues as attending the movies, the character of current literature, the foreign policies of the United States government, the economic issues before the American electorate, the problem of alcoholic liquors, and the like. There is, indeed, no phase of modern living which the Church might not properly touch in this program of Christian guidance.

Such a program of Christian education over the whole gamut of modern living will vitalize and stimulate the church itself. It will also contribute hundreds of thousands of trained and informed citizens prepared to cast intelligent votes on the decisive issues of the day. But the significance of such a thorough-going program is deeper still. It will mean that the church has set itself to the redemption of modern society. It will do

this in the one way open to it without repudiating its genius as a spiritual institution. It is the function of the state to pass laws and invoke the policeman. Christian people as citizens will continue to invoke the policeman to guarantee for themselves and their neighbors minimum conditions of security and peace. Just at present we should all pray, "God give us more and better and bigger policemen." But the function of the church is to persuade and convert and redeem. There was a time when the church identified itself with the temporal power. We have seen clearly the mistake of those days. There have been tendencies at times since for the church to create a false distinction between the sacred and the secular which it would turn over to the state without interference as no concern of her own.

Christian education is for Protestantism the answer to these alternatives. The church must bring her members to study under her leadership modern economic life, the problems concerning the family, international relations, questions of recreation, the problem of current literature, questions of the relations of different races and of different social classes. In the light of the Christian conception of man as a spiritual being, these things will be judged. Thus will the Christian spirit enter into and redeem the society of our day. The words of the apostle Paul sound strangely as if they were addressed to our own day: "Be not conformed to the pattern of this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds *that ye may prove what is the will of God*, that good and acceptable and perfect thing."

The Significance of Jesus Christ for the Modern World

ALBERT EDWARD DAY

THE old world is crumbling. A new world is overdue. Unregulated capitalism has labored and brought forth the most irrational depression in history, with bread lines in the cities and bread stuffs piled high on the farms of America; with unclad shivering children in the North and unemployed weavers in the South; with colossal debts that cannot be paid and idle money which cannot be bought. If ever a system revealed its inadequacy to marshal unused and ample resources for unmet and appalling need, the present economic organization has done it. Nationalism has labored and brought forth crippling tariffs and cruel wars and costly armaments, with supporting tax burdens so great as to threaten the very existence of governments which armaments are supposed to maintain. Ecclesiasticism has labored and brought forth a sectarianism which has filled our urban and rural communities with debt-ridden, poorly equipped, inefficient churches which continue neither for the glory of God nor for the honor of the denomination which fostered them. Authoritarianism has labored and brought forth an ethic whose rigidity satisfies neither the flaming spirit of youth with its craving for adventure nor their more disciplined elders who ask only to be left undisturbed by their firesides. It has forged for us a theology whose God is not ample enough to be the dwelling place for the mind and heart of this generation. Democracy has labored and has given to the world a people preyed upon by rackets and pillaged by "pork barrels," and crushed beneath the upper and nether millstone of lobbies and ward heelers, and tyrannized over by city governments so inept and extravagant and corrupt that neither life nor property is safe within their borders.

While the present order has about completed the demonstration of its futility, the new order is not yet visible. Humanity is wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born. Our captains of industry roam in a twilight zone between socialism and individualism, craving government in business when it will save them from bankruptcy, want-

ing none of it when it appears to be about to try to save the people. Many of our statesmen look cross-eyed at the whole question of international relations, so that the observer does not know whether they are gazing hopefully at some form of co-operation or have the attention riveted upon isolation. Probably they themselves do not know. They do not want war and are afraid to take risks for peace. They desire a World Tribunal for other nations but are afraid to commit America's cause to its keeping. Our churchmen, in these days of falling income, are beginning to feel some of the woes of sectarianism. They say they do not want to perpetuate the old divisions but they tremble at the thought of union. So we have associations which are neither division nor union but an arrangement which permits churches to shoulder arms when the safety of their denominational shibboleths demands it or to stack arms when they need each other's help in some great celebration or denunciation. Discontented with authoritarianism, a multitude are nevertheless terrified lest a morality and a theology evolved by the free spirit of man will result in moral anarchy, so they appeal now to a code, now to a life, with a resulting anomaly in conduct and faith which mystifies and sometimes angers the observer. And who can describe the plight of those who are outraged by the failures of government? Between democracy and dictatorship they ceaselessly waver, finding some allurements and promise of peace in the arms of a Mussolini or a Hitler but wondering at other times if in a multitude of lovers there may not be greater safety as well as variety.

Toward the deliverance from the tyrannies and inadequacies of the old world and the creation of the new many agencies ought to contribute—secular education, politics, the press, even economic necessity, and especially the church. The church can, if it can re-organize its own life about, and present to the world the creative Christ. F. R. Barry has written many significant things but none quite so significant as this: "Nothing matters more for Christianity, its activities and its preoccupation than to release the mind of Christ." It is to be feared we do not have that mind. The pathetic word which John puts on the lips of Jesus, "Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?", would be on those wondering lips again were he to walk into our churches and hear our sermons about him or into our homes and listen to our conversations concerning him, or into our minds and read our thoughts of him. We have had nineteen centuries in which we have built churches and cathedrals in

his honor, have erected colleges and seminaries to promote the study of his life, have filled libraries with books about him, have delivered and listened to more discourses about him than have ever centered about any other person in history. But still we do not know him. We do know many of his sayings as far as verbal content and dictionary meanings are concerned. But we have not fathomed his sayings nor caught the spirit and significance of his life. Were he himself to come and utter in our own pulpits and classrooms in the language of our own time his convictions about current practices and customs, were he to return and take up his duties as a citizen of the twentieth century in the same fundamental spirit as controlled his activities in the first, he would be as much of a contrast with what most of us think of him as the garb and speech of Bethlehem would be with the modes and manners of Baltimore. One need not be a historical disciple of Albert Schweitzer to recognize the aptness of his characterization of the so-called Lives of Jesus, as "a weakening down of his world condemning demands," and "a tuning up of his denial of the world with our acceptance of it." Nor can we evade the charge that "in those books about Jesus many of his greatest sayings are found lying in a corner like explosive shells from which the charges have been removed." It was said of Henry Irving that he achieved the celebrated feat of performing Hamlet with the part of Hamlet omitted, substituting for it the fascinating figure of Henry Irving. It has too often been the case that we preachers who stood up to present Christ have achieved the not so celebrated feat of preaching Christ with Christ left out and substituting instead the not so fascinating figure of the preacher.

There is no element in his character and ministry more frequently lost from view than his creativeness. He never lived by rote, even sacred rote. He looked freshly into every situation, every problem, every human need, and he met them not by reciting old formulas, however sanctified, but by an effort to conserve all the human values at stake, and to bring men and women into touch with God and into possession of the abundant life. He would do the same if he were here to-day. Just as certainly as he would wear not a robe but a business suit, would walk not in sandals but in shoes, would speak not Aramaic but Americanese, would talk not to the first-century mind but to the twentieth, would use the concepts not of that far-away time but of ours, he would not attempt to meet the problems of our complex life by repeating the precepts he gave for the simple peasants of Judea but he would think and speak in terms of whatever is required to

preserve human welfare and to advance the kingdom of God. If we are to release the mind of Christ to the modern world, we must inquire not merely what did he say then, but what would he say now; what did he do then, but what would he do now. Only thus can we escape wooden ethics and dead theology and redeem the life of our generation. You may remember what the friar said to Jean Inglesant, "I saw the dead Christ over the altars and the kneeling crowds around. Suddenly it seemed to me that I was conscious of a general movement and rush of feet, and that a strange wild excitement prevailed in every part of Rome. The churches became emptied, the people pouring out of them into the streets. The dead Christs before the altars faded from their crosses, the sacred tapers went out of their own accord, for it spread through Rome as in a moment that a miracle had happened and that the living Christ was come." The hope of this generation is that the dead Christ may disappear from our altars and our pulpits and that the living, creative Christ shall come to be the center of our worship and the inspiration of our thinking and doing.

We need his creative vision of God, a holy God such as Israel worshipped but with that holiness redefined—a holiness which has as its supreme concern on earth not ceremonies, not creeds, not even the adoration of itself, but life for all humanity; a holiness which is blasphemed less by an oath than by cruelty or injustice or even insensitiveness to human need. The God revealed by Jesus was a God of intimate personal concerns. Jesus lived on the assumption that God cares whether people are hungry, or cold, or lonely, or in danger, or dying. The God whom Jesus inspired men to believe was a God on the hunt for sinners, not as a detective to spy on them, nor as a judge to punish them, but as a Father to save. To the creative character of such a conviction about God and the resulting confidence in him and life for him, the history of the early church bears witness. Religion came alive, became a transforming agency in the souls of people; made drunkards sober, thieves honest, libertines loyal; men who had lost faith in themselves took up again the serious business of life with vigor; heart-broken women found strength to carry on; cowards became heroes and died martyrs' deaths or rotted in dungeons for the sake of truth and right; life became a magnificent adventure. Socially insignificant, economically powerless, politically disfranchised, numerically unimportant, they launched a campaign for the conquest of the world. In an empire where the seeds of decay were already sown this one group exhibited a

marvelous vitality which increased as imperial power waned, survived the wreck of the state, preserved a semblance of civilization amid the general collapse, emerged under a Luther, a Calvin, a Wesley, to repeat the moral and spiritual miracles of its earliest history.

To-day the air is full of uncertainty about God. The total result of our revision of theology seems to be the conclusion in the minds of some: "Well, if there is a God, he must be like that but I am not any surer than before that there is one." The head of one of the great denominational bodies of the country who has been holding conferences with ministers across the land said that he was amazed and disconcerted to discover how many preachers there were who were entirely in doubt about even the existence of God and who are asking themselves whether religion needs a God anyhow. Religion has lost its aggressiveness. In few towns and cities is there any effort to win the great unchurched multitude comparable in vigor to the persistent, intelligent labor to raise welfare funds. We are mainly content to gather in the children of church families, to receive members from other churches, and an occasional recruit from the outside. Perhaps the most militant note heard to-day is among those who are seeking a new social order. But even there is a great deal of pessimism. Some of our social crusaders act like brave leaders of a forlorn hope and even those who are most expectant are not drawing their hopes from the triumph of Christian principles in the minds of men so much as from the collapse of the present system through its own inherent inadequacy and corruption. Christianity needs to recover something which it had at its beginning and I do not know how that will ever come to pass save by a rediscovery of God through Jesus Christ.

Certainly there is no idea more challenging, more morally creative, than the idea that God's holiness measures us by what happens to other personalities because of us. Someone had a dream about a woman who arrived at the gate of heaven, beautiful, fair, expectant. Life had evidently been a pleasant journey for her and she hoped that eternity would be as pleasant. But she was rejected because the keeper of the gate saw blood upon her sandals. She had trampled others on the way. It was an arresting dream and behind it there is an arresting conception, which is at one with the mind of Jesus about God, namely, that no success avails if it is stained by another's tears, that no honor is honorable if won by another's hurt, that no generosity can sanctify the gold heaped up by exploitation, that

no acts of worship can atone for wretchedness one has planted in another's life, that the first inescapable demand of the divine is just that one be human. If that conception once became regnant, man's inhumanity to man which makes countless thousands mourn would come to an end to-morrow. And how the unveiling of a genuinely Father-God would change people's outlook on life; how into tired eyes there would come a new luster, into minds weary with the baffling problems of our social order there would descend a new poise and peace, into hearts bitter with the memory of sin and failure there would enter a new sweetness and courage! The significance of Jesus for the modern mind is just in the character of God he declared so convincingly, a character confirmed by reason and experience and needing to be revealed once again in our pulpits if they are to become creative agencies amid the disorder and decay of our sick time.

Our world needs to recapture the creative ethic of Jesus, inevitably flowing from this vision of God. He turned away from striking sayings and logical systems and rigorous imitations as a means of making men good and good for something, and he asked men to drink at the fountains of his life, to imbibe his spirit, believing that the resulting life and spirit would be competent to meet the changing issues of the days and years. It is a revolutionary approach to the whole subject of ethics but it is a revitalizing one. It is the only one which cannot be outmoded by time and the inevitable changes which time brings in every phase of human life, industrial, political, international. It is the only one which is competent for youth and age, for men and women, for every race and every clime. How often in his name his own ethic has been denied, we know too well. One preacher was attempting in a Sunday evening forum to share the mind of Christ concerning some prevailing economic practices. At the conclusion of his address a lawyer, the counsel for a great corporation, arose to argue that Jesus said nothing about economics and that we had better use our time on Christian subjects. The lawyer was partly right. Jesus was not a student of economics; he never used the word. He never enunciated what might by a stretch of the imagination be called an economic law. But one cannot "feel" the life of Jesus or possess his spirit without receiving therefrom a challenge to which he must give answer in every activity, economic, political, international, or whatnot.

The essence of his spirit may be described; first, as a reverence for human beings, irrespective of their class or race, which makes their welfare

one's supreme concern. Baron von Hügel said as his last word, "Christianity taught us to care; caring is the great thing." Second, absolute trust in God, which brings with it new convictions as to what can be done in the world. Third, an experience of God which matches conviction with power. Modern inductive ethics sets up as a criterion, by which all conduct can be measured, its effect upon personality and upon that inter-action of personalities in which alone the individual attains his fullest life. In this respect Jesus and modern inductive ethics are one. But Jesus has something to contribute to the ethical situation which inductive ethics cannot give, an absolute trust in God which begets in the soul a new conviction as to what can be done for the individual and with society. Given the highest sort of concern about men and women, what one will undertake for them, what sacrifice of self-interest he will make in their behalf, what social programs he will conceive for their sake, will necessarily be limited by what he believes to be the possibilities of the situation. If man is incurably a fighting animal, then it is useless to lay any social plans or set up any institutions which demand for their fulfillment a warless world. If man is irredeemably selfish there is little hope for a co-operative social order which goes beyond the ability of selfishness to see its own ultimate benefit. If humanity is never capable of escape from the bondage of economic necessity, then a machine civilization manned by engineers is the best that can be provided for him, and it is useless, even unkind, to thrust art and religion upon him. But granting the incurable pugnacity of man, if one sees above him a God who risks his Kingdom in the keeping of love, then there is inspiration to attempt to persuade men to risk their kingdoms to the guardianship of goodwill, because one can believe that a loving God will co-operate in the effort to tame the tiger in them and to build a society which is less like a jungle and more like a civilization. Confessing the prevalence of selfishness, if one attains a faith that there is a cross at the heart of the universe, then it becomes possible for him to dream of a co-operative society in which the resources of all are available for the needs of all because the invisible but ever-crucified God will be the untiring and undefeated ally of every effort to eradicate selfishness from the human soul. Admitting the pressure of material needs upon the race, and the large part which the mere hunger for bread has played in the molding of laws and institutions, if one nevertheless believes that the universe is ultimately spiritual, then he gains courage to attempt the emancipation of man from the bondage of things

and the enthronement of spiritual values in every phase of life, because a spiritual universe can be content with nothing less. And if one's faith in God passes over into an experience of God, something happens to him which provides the dynamic whereby dreams become deeds; purpose, practice; theoretical ethics, a saintly, crusading redemptive life.

Out of the presence of this spirit in the lives of men in every age has come behavior superior to behaviors then in vogue, which, refusing to be content with current customs, with accepted ethical standards, refusing to believe that nothing better is possible, actually inaugurated nobler customs, created new standards, achieved the better in every sphere of life. That spirit still writes a nobler ethic wherever given a chance. Here is a friend of mine in business. Depression has hit him hard. For months his large store has been losing money steadily. His clerks are standing behind counters in front of which are no buyers. The economists of the world would say, "Discharge those clerks." But he has not done so. "Why," he said to me, "they have families dependent on them. If I dismiss them, what will they do?" So he is drawing upon his savings to keep them on his force. That is not the result of an economic law or of a speculative philosophy but of a life through which flows the spirit of Christ with his infinite pity and love for human beings.

Suppose that we should take this ethically creative Christ into our pulpits and classrooms and editorial offices and councils of church. Suppose that we should help our people to see that nothing is settled save the principle of sacrificial reverence for personality and the providence of a loving God ever eager to help personality to fulfillment. Suppose that we should be always at the task of convincing them that it is *their* task in every sphere of life to examine what is happening to all personalities, their own and others, affected by their deeds. Suppose we should lead them into that fellowship with Christ which would not only make them sacrificially care but create in them a faith in and an experience of God who greatly cares, can anyone imagine that the ethical complacency of our people would continue? Would we witness, any longer, luxury in cushioned pews praising God in forgetfulness of the misery just beyond the church doors; huge dividends being distributed by churchmen in the presence of wage cuts or no wage at all; the formation by those who are called Christians of giant holding companies, which one discerning financier describes as "an attempt to get something for nothing"? We should not create a new society

overnight, but we should be less often affronted by the spectacle of men who, in spite of the inadequacies of the present order, hope for nothing better than a return to the frenzies and instabilities of Harding-Coolidge days. We should not furnish offhand a solution to the race problem in America; for even those who care most are at times in great perplexity. But neither should we be a party to the placid churchmanship which thinks because there are Negro churches and Negro schools, all is well with the soul of the black man in America. We might not prevent another war, but we should confront the next war hysteria with a more Christian conscience which would not become the dupe of lies and the distributor of hate, but would, if necessary, go to prison or stand before the firing squad in a new atonement for the sins of nations and a new and unforgettable appeal to men to banish their lust for wealth and power and share with each other the goods of life. We should not immediately bring the city of God down out of heaven, but we should certainly have less of hell in the governments of earth. The worst city administration I have ever known was manned by a mayor who said, when candidating, that if elected he would lift the ballot up to the Bible and the government up to God.

On our church rolls and in our church pews are men and women who have within their keeping the regeneration of the present social order or its continuance at a poor dying rate of recurring depressions, with increasing miseries and resultant waste of human life. If these men and women really cared for human beings and believed that God cares and that infinite resources are available for our effort to make civilization Christian, vast changes would have been begun in every department of human life. Why have these influential citizens been able to sit under our ministry year after year and not have something happen to them which would send them out to high ethical adventures for the sake of human life? The natural moral inertia which affects us all, the complexity of the problems to be solved, the institutional lag which is like a ball and chain upon the feet of individual good intentions, the depravity of the group mind—all of these tend to create a stable but very stale conscience. But it is impossible not to believe that one reason for the persistence of incompetent social ideals and practices is that the Christ whom we have presented is merely a historic figure whose setting and response cannot be repeated in this century, instead of an ethically creative Christ whose spirit within the life of the individual will redeem the life of any century.

Some Aspects of Contemporary Japan

RICHARD ROBERTS

IN two months, even with the best intentions and the most alert curiosity, it is not possible to gather anything more substantial than impressions of a strange country. My wife and I did indeed succeed in seeing a good deal of the country and made a multitude of happy and instructive contacts with its people; and the experience remains with us as one of the most illuminating and most rewarding episodes in our life. But we felt that we had done little more than scratch the surface of living Japan and that any impression should be reported with becoming modesty. All the same, we believe we made a beginning in understanding a difficult and complex matter.

The rôle which Japan is playing in these days appears to most outsiders to be of a somewhat ambiguous and tortuous kind; and no attempt will be made in this article to defend the Manchurian adventure upon which Japan has embarked. But before any judgment is passed upon the policy of Japan in any direction, there should be some effort to understand the extraordinary internal difficulties under which it is laboring. For instance, one hears a good deal of criticism of the military and naval ascendancy in the government of Japan; and of that fact there can be no question. But it is not often realized outside Japan itself that this military ascendancy has been made possible by the public discredit into which both the recognized political parties have fallen. Both alike, when in power, had a record of corruption and inefficiency, and accordingly lost the confidence of the public. At the crucial moment, any alternative seemed preferable to party government; and as there was no alternative in sight save the military, there was no possible opposition to its seizure of power. Unfortunately there is still no adequate alternative in sight. Mr. Matzuoka, who was the Japanese delegate to the League of Nations at the time of the Manchurian imbroglio, has lately formed a society for the abolition of political parties. Whether this is a movement in support of the existing regime or an attempt to set up a civil Fascism does not clearly appear. But it serves to indicate the impasse of Japanese politics at the present time.

It is hardly possible to predict the future. It is probable that while the peasantry, with its traditional loyalty to the army, is favorable to the prevailing military domination, the majority of the workers of the great cities are antipathetic if not actively hostile to it. Mr. Hugh Byas, the Tokyo correspondent of the *New York Times*, is of the opinion (and his long residence in Japan gives weight to his judgment) that the next move in Japanese politics will be to make the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for War directly responsible to the Emperor, while the other members of the cabinet will presumably remain responsible to the Diet. Having regard to the traditional position of the Emperor in Japan, this looks like a kind of triumvirate dictatorship. It has to be remembered that the parliamentary government of Japan is *sui generis*. The Emperor does not govern by and according to the will of the people but *in consultation* with the people; and under those conditions, constitutional arrangements are possible which would be unthinkable in a normal democracy.

The only thing that seems certain at the moment is that, failing the emergence of a strong liberal or radical party that can command the confidence of the public, the tendency will be toward a continuation of "national," which also means nationalistic, and with that (though I suspect decreasingly) militarist government. Curiously enough the foregoing had hardly been written when news arrived that the present Minister of Education had been found in some delinquency and was to be relieved of his office, with the possible consequence that Saito and the rest of his cabinet may also have to go. But what will succeed it, if it falls, it is difficult to foresee. There is a real danger of a more intransigent government; and the notorious ineptitude of the military mind in politics—wherever you find it—may have in this case a dangerously untoward outcome.¹

At the same time, it is not helpful to ascribe Japan's aims (even if they are actually what popular Western opinion takes them to be) altogether to mere imperialistic wantonness. Japan has on its hands an extremely difficult internal economic problem, and, so far as I can see, it cannot solve that problem, as it were, "off its own bat." The facts are, or

¹ After this was written the mail brought a letter from a friend in Japan in which he says: "You may have noticed in news from Japan that there is a great change in the general attitude. The present session of the Diet has seen an amount of criticism of the military which would have been unthinkable a year ago."

at least should be, well known. The population of Japan is somewhere around sixty-five million people, to which is added a million or so a year. Of these, well over a half derive their living from agriculture, chiefly the culture of rice, of which in the aggregate an enormous quantity is produced. The area of Japan and its possessions (excluding Korea and Manchukuo) is 172,850 square miles. You could dump it all down in the State of Texas, and there would be still 72,000 square miles of Texas left over. But of this area, only about one eighth is under cultivation, and it would be difficult, owing to the nature of the soil, to bring very much more into agricultural use. Consequently, the holdings are very small; and the economic lot of the Japanese farmer is deplorable. His average income is said to be no more than 300 yen a year (that is, less than a hundred dollars) and there is an average indebtedness of a thousand yen a head upon which the farmer is rarely able to pay any interest, not to speak of repaying the capital. I was told that there was a firm of landsharks in Kobe which employed two girls at the exclusive task of filling out foreclosure notices upon farmers whose payments were overdue. For this, I cannot vouch; but it seems in keeping with what one continually heard on all hands of the distress of the agrarian population. That industrial development in the cities has led to a certain alleviation of the pressure in the countryside may be true; but it has not led to any important improvement in rural conditions.

Meantime, Japan is faced with the problem of keeping its people alive. It can find very little relief from emigration, partly because there are so few available regions into which Japanese are admitted, and as few in which, if they were admitted, the climatic conditions are suitable. Japanese emigration to the Asiatic mainland has so far not been and is not likely to be extensive. So that Japan finds that it must look to the development of its manufacturing industries to keep its people adequately clothed and fed; and this development has been going on in recent years on an astonishing scale. To this end, it must have access to raw materials and to markets. Within its own natural borders, the supply of industrial raw material is meager; and indubitably one motive for the occupation of Manchuria has been the presence in that region of natural resources which may keep Japanese factories running. Here lies too the motive for its determined and well-organized drive upon the markets of the world, in which, by virtue of the low price of Japanese labor and its astonishing mechanical

competency, it is able to undersell the products of other countries—a situation which is already causing general misgiving and alarm.

Indeed, the standard of living of its industrial workers is a reproach to Japan. Indirectly it has provided the only ultimately sufficient remedy for this trouble. Its faith in education and its serious effort to educate its people will inevitably create in its people a natural and increasing demand for more of the amenities of life, as well as develop a self-conscious and intelligent proletariat which will have power to get its demands attended to. This, however, will take time. And meantime, if impossible restrictions are placed in other lands upon the importation of Japanese products, or if in other ways other nations refuse to co-operate with Japan in relieving the stress of its internal problems, we must look forward to the possibility that Japan may again take the law into her own hands, since imperialistic dreams and economic interests have proved themselves, elsewhere than in Japan, to be capable of serving each others' ends to some purpose.

This is not said by way of an apologia for Japan's occupation of Manchuria, or of any other similar enterprise in the future; nor is it intended to be a pleading of extenuating circumstances. It is no more than an attempt at a realistic interpretation of things as they are: and does not so much represent my own judgment as report the impressions I received in conversation with friends, Japanese and foreign, this last summer. There is a considerable body of opinion in Japan which is deeply critical of the current tendencies; but it is not yet vocal and effective because so far it has not produced conspicuous and courageous leadership. There is undoubtedly a certain ferment of communism among the industrial workers in the cities, though at the moment it does not appear to be formidable. There has been a good deal of repression of communistic opinion; and its present apparent inactivity may nevertheless cover a wider underground propaganda than the authorities or the general public is aware of. In any case it is questionable how far a communistic movement could go in Japan in view of the intense conservatism and the political inertia of the rural areas. Not indeed that there are not conditions that might foster the growth of communism; for it is undoubtedly true that the very low standard of living on the one hand has a very dramatic antithesis in the concentration of very great wealth in the hands of a very small body of people. . . .

There is a factor in the situation which seems to me to contain impor-

tant possibilities for the future, even including the possibility of a peaceful revolution of Japan's economic life. This is the astonishing co-operative movement now inspired and led by Kagawa. A hundred years ago there was a similar movement afoot in England, under the leadership of Robert Owen. Owen had become skeptical of the usefulness of political action and preached the doctrine of political indifferentism. For his own attitude he invented the term *Socialism*. It is perhaps worth recalling that the term socialism began its career as the antithesis not of individualism but of politicalism. Owen's socialism was pure co-operation. His hope was that the workers might by co-operative enterprise, both in production and distribution, create an economic system, that, spreading, would ultimately crowd out the existing competitive system. For a time, the co-operative movement flourished amazingly. It was discredited by the collapse of Owen's fatuous "Labour Exchange" with its policy of "labour notes" for currency. How far the Co-operative Movement might have gone were it not for this unfortunate association, it is impossible to tell. There is nothing unreasonable in the belief that a growing co-operative movement might draw away the life-blood of a competitive system and lead to its death from sheer inanition.

Something like this seems to me not impossible in Japan; for the results so far seem to indicate that the Japanese have an undoubted aptitude for this kind of co-operation. The first "co-operative" in Japan was formed thirty years ago; and it has been growing steadily ever since. In recent years its growth has been phenomenal. These co-operatives were of various kinds, for collective buying and collective selling, medical co-operatives and credit co-operatives and so forth. There are no less than fourteen thousand local co-operatives—now united in the All-Japan Co-operative Congress; and my information is that the total membership includes about five million families. The recent growth has been chiefly due to Kagawa's activities.

The danger of a co-operative movement is that, whatever idealism may give it birth, it may degenerate into an organized selfishness and then die. Kagawa realizes this fully: and while he is not blind to the economic possibilities of co-operation, his chief interest in it is his belief that it is the expression of the Christian spirit in the economic region. In his rural centers, there are opportunities of education in scientific agriculture and especially in the cultivation of foods that will correct and enrich the present over-starchy diet of the peasant, as well as add to his marketable produce;

and there is training and practice in the technique of co-operation. But the core of the rural center is the Gospel School, in which men are introduced not only to the teaching but to the very spirit of Jesus. Here alone, thinks Kagawa, can be found the abiding sustenance of a co-operative order. And it was his clear perception of this fundamental spiritual and ethical prerequisite of a continuing co-operative order that led him to inaugurate that widespread evangelistic movement which has become known as The Kingdom of God Movement. He is still deeply immersed in the evangelistic campaign, though the cessation of outside support for his enterprises has put some limitations on his time and opportunity for evangelism, inasmuch as he is compelled to resort to writing popular fiction in order to raise funds. It is not impossible that the Co-operative Movement may actually be at the present moment the most pregnant economic element in the Japanese situation—not only for Japan within itself, but in its relations to the world. For, as Kagawa sees, co-operation is the royal road to peace. Christianity in Japan has been an affair of the towns and cities. There are 12,000 villages in Japan; and it is doubtful, according to Kagawa, whether the gospel has been openly preached in one tenth of them. There has always been the definite obstacle, that, in view of the deplorable economic condition of the peasant, there was no prospect of establishing self-supporting churches in the rural areas. Kagawa's rural centers have suggested a way around this obstacle. The proposal is to establish a Gospel School in a suitable spot and appoint to its leadership a Japanese Christian minister who will be prepared to support himself by work on an allotment of land, perhaps with the help of his neighbors. Around the Gospel School will gradually be assembled, as time goes on, opportunities for education, agricultural and other, and for training in methods of co-operation, and no doubt with these, social and recreational activities. Selected foreign missionaries who have aptitude for the task will for a time be set apart to superintend and direct these experiments; but it is hoped that before long the centers will be able to stand upon their own feet. One mission hopes to establish two such centers this year; and others will doubtless follow the example. It is an interesting reversion to the medieval ideal of making the church the focus and the inspiration of the entire life of the community. Should the project prove feasible, it opens a new and important day in the Christianization of Japan.

God's Face at the Window

WILLIAM BLAKE

WALLACE H. FINCH

IN the long course of English letters there is no stranger and more haunting figure than William Blake. Poet, prophet, painter and engraver, he combined the most exacting craftsmanship with artistic excellence and mystical insight and vision. A recent revival of interest in his work is attested by the publication in England and in the United States, within the last five years, of no less than thirty major attempts to interpret his artistic genius and describe his life; while an even larger number of efforts have been made in critical and definitive essays to appraise his work.

Blake was born and spent all his life, with the exception of about three years residence at Felpham, in London. Born in 1757, three years before the coronation of George III, he died in 1827, seven years after the end of a reign conspicuous in the annals of English kingship for its length, its ineptitude and its mistaken judgments. His days were spent amid wars and rumors of war. The Seven Years War, which threw all the governments of Europe into turmoil, began a year before his birth, and during his lifetime came England's two wars with America and her much more costly and long-continued war with the French. The latter covered practically a quarter of a century, beginning during the French Revolution and erupting intermittently until Waterloo.

Religiously and intellectually it was a period of the conflict of strange forces. The arid dialectics of Deism, the fantastic claims of Cagliostro, Swedenborgian mysticism and the Wesleyan revival vied in claiming the public interest and attention. Rosicrucians, fortune-tellers, alchemists and geomancers at one extreme, and the original Blue Stockings at the other represented the gamut of the prevailing fashion in the intellectual and social world.

Blake received practically no formal education. His father withdrew him from school almost as soon as he had started. At eleven years of age he entered a drawing school, kept by a certain Mr. Pars, who seems to have been well qualified to introduce him to the classical tradition in art. Later

he was apprenticed to James Basire, the engraver, and began the career that was to issue in such distinction in his method of presenting his writings to the world.

All his life Blake was subject to visions. When he was four years old he saw God's face at the window and was greatly frightened. A few years later his father, who believed thoroughly in spirits on Sundays when he worshiped with his fellow Swedenborgians, administered a sound thrashing to his son for claiming he had found the prophet Ezekiel sitting in the fields near his home. On another occasion he saw a tree filled with angels, who sang and waved their glittering wings in the branches. At fourteen years of age he refused to be apprenticed to the engraver Ryland, who then enjoyed the admiration and confidence of every one, because, said Blake, "The man looks as if he would live to be hanged," as some years later he was. At the death of his brother Robert, he saw Robert's spirit flying away and, "clapping his hands for joy." It was Robert's spirit—this time in a dream—which showed him the process by which his books were to be engraved, printed and colored. Once he saw a ghost, a human figure covered with metallic scales, standing at the top of a stairway.

From his own words we get the impression that all his life Blake walked among the demons and spirits of the dead. At least once the prophet Isaiah dined with him. In his *Memorable Fancies* he records his experiences in the strange places to which, like the prophets of old, he found himself translated. Once he saw a fairy's funeral.

"I was walking alone in my garden: there was a great stillness among the branches and flowers, and more than common sweetness in the air: I heard a low and pleasant sound, and I knew not whence it came. At last I saw the broad leaf of a flower move, and, underneath I saw a procession of creatures of the size and color of green and grey grasshoppers, bearing a body laid out on a rose leaf, which they buried with songs and then disappeared. It was a fairy funeral."

At Felpham he saw "majestic shadows, grey but luminous and superior to the common height of men." These were the symbolic forms of Moses and the Prophets, of Homer, Dante and Milton. They spoke to him in English, or rather, "in their own tongue which reached his ear in English." He could summon at will the spirits of the great men of old, and even unknown beings like "The Man Who Built the Pyramids." It was in this way that he was enabled to paint his "Ghost of a Flea," which is his symbol of militarism. It is a monster in human form, with a low brow and

membranous ears, a sharp sting-like tongue, greedy eyes fixed upon a bowl of blood which he is about to drink, powerful limbs and sharp claws.

Many of Blake's poems were "dictated" to him by these preternatural visitants; twenty or thirty lines at a time which he wrote down on the spot and never retouched, nor would he allow others to change them.

These visions were his consolation. They enabled him to forget all the unhappiness of life, the coldness of his friends and the indifference of the world. He lived happily and died singing. A short time before his death, solemnly placing his hands upon the head of a little girl, he said he could wish her no greater blessing than that her life might be as full of happiness as his had been.

All this at once raises the question: in what sense did Blake "see" his visions? In commenting upon them Professor Berger, in his great work, *William Blake, Poet and Mystic*, thinks we are not to suppose the figures he saw to have possessed objective reality; and then curiously enough argues that we must not close our minds to the idea that such appearances may have external existence.

A clew to the solution of the difficulty may be found in Blake's own words. Once when asked where he saw one of his visions, he touched his forehead, replying, "Here." Perhaps his fullest attempt to make clear in what sense he saw the sometimes beautiful and sometimes grotesque figures he describes in his poetry, or depicts in his paintings, drawings and engravings, is in his letter to Doctor Trusler:

"I see everything I paint in this world, but everybody does not see alike. To the eyes of a mizer a guinea is far more beautiful than the sun, and a bag worn with the use of money has more beautiful proportions than a vine filled with grapes. The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing, which stands in the way. Some see Nature all ridicule and deformity and by these I shall not regulate my proportions: and some scarce see Nature at all. But to the eye of the man of imagination Nature is Imagination itself. As a man is so he sees. As the eye is formed such are its powers. . . . To me this world is all one continued vision of fancy or imagination."

This is quite in keeping with that other statement of Blake, in "The Vision of the Last Judgment," so frequently quoted:

"I assert for myself, that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is hindrance and not action 'What!' it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a guinea?' Oh! no, no! I see an

innumerable company of the heavenly hosts crying 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty!' I question not my corporeal eye any more than I should question a window concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it."

What first strikes anyone who attempts to review the large and growing literature about Blake is the lack of agreement among the critics as to how he is to be regarded, and how, if at all, he is to be understood. In 1930 Miss Emily S. Hamblen published a large volume on the interpretation of what she calls Blake's Minor Prophecies. She assumes Blake to have been one who, living before the days of our grandfathers, discerned as clearly as we do now that the human race is approaching a distinct spiritual crisis; and that the question whether the age has a supply of fundamental vigor sufficient to carry it over the crisis without loss of the highest values, is one to which there is yet no certain answer. She thinks that through this effort Blake allied himself with the seers of all the ages, and becomes for the modern world what the great visionaries of the Egyptian, the Hebrew and the Greek civilizations were for antiquity. She claims him to have been the most profound psychologist of the Christian age, searching the innermost recesses of the Christian soul.

At the opposite extreme from this understanding of Blake may be set the views of Mr. J. Commyns Carr, expressed much earlier, but still representative of some reviewers whose attention has been attracted to him by the recent revival of interest in his work. Doctor Carr believes that the charge that Blake was insane must, within certain well-defined limits, be admitted. Noting Swinburne's earlier effort to do for Blake's prophecies something of the same sort that S. Foster Damon and Miss Hamblen have done in our day, he says, "The defects of such works (the Prophecies) are too grave for any kind of serious vindication to be really possible, and if Blake had produced nothing more or nothing better his claims to rank among English poets could not be successfully maintained."

Representative of something in the nature of a mediating view between these extremes, is the position of Laurence Binyon, who thinks that Blake's full message was given to the world in his prophetic books and therefore they cannot be neglected; but that these books are not great poetry, or in any real sense, poetry at all.

In this clash of opinions concerning the merits of Blake's poetical work, there is something of the fundamental conflict between varying understand-

ings of the nature of poetry. While there is great liberality in the modern attitude toward poetry, there are few who would accept without qualification Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's saying that poetry is "the kind of thing the poets have written." If at present little or no agreement exists as to what the necessary conventions are, still there is a good deal of the disposition to insist that there are conventions.

There always have been those who insist that poetry exists for its own sake. When it is used as a means, they say, and not served as an end in itself, it loses its vitality and its distinction as poetry as opposed to prose. It is at once obvious that in the prophetic poems Blake was using poetry as a means. Words were no longer abstract symbols; they had assumed in his imagination the force of individual images, and were thus used by him to project his individual message.

But leaving aside for the moment the abnormal and sometimes fantastic character of the symbols he employed, his method has great precedent. Milton frankly tells us that *Paradise Lost* was written to justify the ways of God to man. Before Milton, Dante had declared that the purpose of his Comedy was to remove those who are living in this life from a state of wretchedness, and to lead them to a state of blessedness.

No, if Blake's prophecies are not great poetry it is not his method that is at fault. It is rather an excess of imagination and a profligacy of the fantastic in his imagery that betray him. His characters do not contact with anything known to man. Urizen and Orc, Los and Enitharmon do not live. Reuben, Vala, Skofield, Hand, Rahab remain only names. The magic power of vitalizing abstractions, wielded by a genius like Bunyan, Blake does not possess. Had he been able to invest a principle of vice or virtue with personality, clothe it with flesh and blood, make it stand before our eyes, his prophecies might have become something very different from what they are. And then too, considered from the standpoint of thought content alone, Blake's prophecies must strike the average reader as unjustifiably cumbersome and obscure. Even after availing oneself of the painstaking commentaries of Mr. Foster Damon and the expositions of Miss Hamblen, it is impossible to avoid the feeling that the "revelation" they contain could have been far more effectively stated in a less involved and esoteric form.

There would seem to be some justification of this view in the fact that Blake himself found it difficult or impossible to complete so many of his

projections; and in those he did complete he so frequently repeats himself. If, as his most ardent followers insist, he was in possession of such comprehensive and authoritative knowledge concerning matters of vital importance to human kind, it is one of the misfortunes of history that he employed the medium he chose to record it.

When we turn from Blake's prophetic poems to his lyrics, all the smoke of conflict is blown away, and all schools of criticism are united in admiration and praise. It is true that those who present themselves as initiates insist that even his lyrics cannot be fully appreciated without complete understanding of his philosophy. To this the obvious reply is, that those who lay no especial claim to familiarity with his philosophy have been among the earliest to acclaim, and are still the most eager to applaud the grace and loveliness of the lyrics.

Blake's lyrical poems are for the most part associated with *Poetical Sketches* by W. B., printed by the help of his friends in 1783; *Songs of Innocence*, 1789, and *Songs of Experience*, 1794. There are, however, other verses, incorporated in, or introductory to, some of his prophetic poems, which, like

"And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?"

his unforgettable Prelude to "Milton," must be included with his lyrical work. The third and fourth stanzas of this inimitable and thoroughly Blakesian verse,

"Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire.

"I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land."

made it inevitable that sooner or later it would be incorporated in the hymnology of England.

In his *Poetical Sketches* it is easily possible to trace Blake's response to Elizabethan and later writers. He had not fully found his own wings. Yet even in his youth (these poems were written before he was twenty-two)

he imparts to his verse a quality of excellence that is unmistakable. We can think of other poets who might have written his verses "To Spring," with its moving invocation,

"Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds
Kiss thy perfumed garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls
Upon our love-sick land that mourns for thee."

or "To the Evening Star,"

"Thou fair-hair'd angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!"

but it is difficult to think of one who greatly could have improved them. With *Songs of Innocence*, begins Blake's unique method of presenting his works to the world. What that method was can be clearly stated in the words of Mr. John Sampson:

"The text and the surrounding design were written in reverse in a medium impervious to acid, upon small copper plates about five by three inches, which were then etched in a bath of aqua-fortis until the work stood in relief as in a stereotype. From these plates, which to economize copper were, in many cases, engraved upon both sides, impressions were printed, in the ordinary manner, in tints to harmonize with the color scheme afterwards applied by the artist."

The text and illustration are thus interwoven into a harmonious whole, and as the colors can easily be varied, no two copies need be exactly alike. In the hands of an artist like Blake it is not surprising that some of these copies have been pronounced "The most beautiful books in the world." A necessary effect of this method of illuminated printing was to restrict the number of copies, almost as with an artist who displays not books but pictures.

It has been pointed out more than once that had Blake possessed a technical knowledge of music and been able to write down his inventions in that art also, he would have left us the creation of something like an universal art. During his lifetime he did create that universal art, for he sang his songs to his own music, and thus became the only complete realization of the poet in all his faculties that ever has been known.

In the *Songs of Innocence* Blake, who was a childless man, became an

inspired child writing for children. For the first time in nursery poetry we feel that it is the grown-ups who are listening.

"I have no name:
I am but two days old.",

is not a nursery song as we commonly know them, but is literally a song from the nursery. And who but a child could ask in such artless cadence,

"Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?",

and answer their own question,

"Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and he is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!"

The haunting stanza to "Night," Swinburne declares to be of "loftiest loveliness"; and those who read with sympathetic attention, "The Divine Image," will find their minds turning again and again to its beautiful alliteration.

When we come to *The Songs of Experience*, the mood changes. It is no longer the artless innocence of childhood that speaks. Life has a way with it. The Lamb is still in the world, but so is the Tiger. Charity children praying in church have one aspect to the eye of innocence, but to reflecting maturity there are implications in their "innocent faces clean" that are disturbing. The Blake who was later to insist that

"A dog starv'd at his Master's gate
Predicts the ruin of a State.",

is surveying human society. Human love is still a shining flame, but it is a flame; and one of the attributes of flame is that it burns. It is this more mature consciousness that follows the first ecstasy of life, a growing knowledge of good and evil, that speaks to us in *The Songs of Experience*. There is the music of the heaviness of heart in

"Ah, Sun-flower! weary of time,
 Who countest the steps of the Sun,
 Seeking after that sweet golden clime
 Where the traveler's journey is done."

It is lovely music; nevertheless it is the music of wistfulness and of disillusionment. The eternal conflict of the flesh and the spirit is in "The Clod and the Pebble." The paralyzing effects of the old demand of life, "Conform or Die," are in the stanza,

"In every cry of every Man,
 In every Infant's cry of fear,
 In every voice, in every ban,
 The mind-forg'd manacles I hear."

The pathos of all human frustration since time began is in the couplet,

"How can the bird that is born for joy
 Sit in a cage and sing?"

Later the "pathos and sublime" of life will be shot through with the sense of the divine, and our poet will mock the futility of human devising with his discovery that

"For a tear is an Intellectual Thing,
 And a Sigh is the Sword of an Angel King,
 And the bitter groan of the Martyr's woe
 Is an Arrow from the Almighty's Bow."

but now it is the saddening effect of knowledge that is acquired through experience that he sings.

Between the date of *The Songs of Innocence* and that of *The Songs of Experience*, five years later, Blake began to write his Prophetic poems. After *Songs of Experience*, he wrote occasional lyrical poems, but his mind was set now upon grander designs. Each man must follow the vision as he sees it.

Artists the world over are turning to his drawings and paintings with increasing admiration and acclaim. His poems, a hundred years after his death, are coming to their rightful heritage.

It has been repeatedly claimed that Blake lived and died a great Christian and a great churchman. The former claim needs no vindication, and if we are thinking of that "Holy Catholic Church" we confess in our most widely accepted creed, the latter claim will stand. But the regi-

menters among our theological architects would find great difficulty in fitting him into the conventional theological structure without doing violence to some of its symmetries. The author of "The Everlasting Gospel" had his own views as to how doctrine is to be interpreted.

It is refreshing to note that in the life of William Blake there were none of those moral aberrations that frequently mar the story of genius. His Polly he lost. Catherine he won, and in winning her he found one who all his life, with amazing patience and industry, and with equally amazing development and understanding, supplied that point of contact with the practicalities of life without which even genius cannot live. That devotion was repaid. "Stay!" exclaimed the dying artist to his Catherine, "keep as you are! *you* have ever been an angel to me: I will draw you," and a portrait was struck off by a hand soon to lay down his crayons forever. Blake died as he lived. To his humble little rooms, where to the last he worked upon his sublime conceptions, death came and found him singing as he wrought. He composed and uttered songs to his Maker, so sweetly to the ear of his Catherine, that when she stood to hear him, he, looking upon her most affectionately, said, "My beloved! they are *not mine*. No! they are *not mine*!" A humble neighbor woman who was Catherine's only companion when the poet died, said afterwards: "I have been at the death, not of a man, but of a blessed angel." Perhaps she had.

Can Christ Save Society?¹

REVIEWED BY G. BROMLEY OXNAM

PRINCIPAL GARVIE states, "I believe that Christ is the only physician who can heal society as he heals individuals." Unlike many who utter this generalization, Doctor Garvie brings to the question the preparation necessary for adequate answer. His style reveals the much appreciated virtues of simplicity and clarity. Doctor Garvie seeks to justify his conviction in this matter by referring to his personal preparation: "In 1879, I was a first prize man in economics in Edinburgh University, and have continued my interest in the subject since. From 1879 to 1885, I was in business in Glasgow, and know industry and commerce in practice as well as in theory. My leisure during these years was divided between varied study in science and literature and Christian work in the slums of that great city, where I witnessed the wrongs, the anxieties, and the miseries of the poor. I then came to the conclusion that the economic system is not sound, and the social order consequent on it, not right; and the passion for reform then aroused has been alive during half a century, and lives as intensely to-day. It is no emotionless argument, therefore, which is here offered, although I hope that the treatment shows adequate knowledge and competent judgment, a combination of science and sentiment. During all these years I have been preaching the gospel of Christ as the only Divine Saviour and Lord for mankind, for each man and all men. What to many Christian ministers even seem separate and conflicting interests have for me always been one interest, as I cannot conceive a salvation complete as Christ's is, which is not both individual and social."

Doctor Garvie faces the present crisis fearlessly and realistically: "The present situation is not only a *crisis* in the current sense, as a turning-point in human history, when the future of mankind hangs in the balance for progress or disaster; but it is also a *crisis* in the original sense of the Greek word (*Krisis*), a judgment of God, when the ways and works of the modern world are on trial before the tribunal of his purpose for mankind. So serious is the crisis historically that we are justified in thus interpreting it theologically." He is of the opinion that on "questions of economics and politics

¹ *Can Christ Save Society?* By A. E. Garvie. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.00.

the Christian conscience as articulate in most of the Christian churches does not seem to me to be abreast of the claims of the hour, and needs to be educated and stimulated so as to become again an authentic, adequate, and authoritative interpreter of the mind of Christ." He refuses to ascribe all the ills which the world is to-day suffering to the Great War. He knows "that world situation has been made incalculably worse by the consequences of that calamity," but to regard this as an adequate analysis of the world's crisis, he believes, would be to betray ignorance and folly: "For could these factors all be eliminated, the problem would still remain menacing for the future of mankind."

For Doctor Garvie, the present crisis presents an urgent challenge. It is this challenge that is considered in the second section of the book: "One of the most hopeful signs amid much which discourages is, on the one hand, the recognition by economists and politicians that society needs a change of heart if peace, prosperity, security, and progress are to be insured, and, on the other, the acceptance in growing numbers by leaders of the churches of the responsibility of the church to society to bear the Christian testimony and wield the Christian influence in all human relations. There are, however, a sufficient number of the first class who still say to the church: 'Hands off; this is our business, not yours. Don't meddle,' and of the second class who scent a danger to the spirituality of the church in the endeavor to pervade the whole life by the Spirit of Christ. As regards the former, the muddle and mess into which they have brought mankind, and out of which many of them seem to be at their wits' ends to find a way of escape, weaken the force of their prohibition; and, as regards the latter, it requires more patience than even Paul was able to command to bear patiently such rebuke from the ecclesiastical pillars (Galatians 2. 9), whose motto is 'Safety first,' and who cannot hear the tragic call of the world, 'Come over and help us' (Acts 16. 9)."

Doctor Garvie is willing to admit that inexperienced and uninstructed preachers present an amateur interference that can justly be resented. However, having admitted this fact, he insists that neither economics nor politics can be a law unto itself: "Since economics, as just described, is concerned with human *conduct* in the widest sense, man's conscious voluntary action, we cannot withdraw any of the processes from the authority of moral laws, for whatever a man does is right or wrong, and he is good or bad in the doing of it. This may be conceded in the abstract; but its practical applica-

tion is often evaded by the contention that as there are natural, so there are economic, laws, and we cannot escape them, but must submit to them." "That some Christian men can brush aside such problems with the generalization, *business is business*, is not proof that there are not moral challenges on their consciences; it only proves that mammon has made their consciences insensitive." "Has not the material development of modern society outrun the moral and religious, so that business—the pursuit of wealth—has assumed a tyrannous predominance?" "Economic rivalries are the most potent contributory factors to national enmities." "Because the kingdom of God is not being sought first, mammon is allowed to rule." "The Christian Church . . . must frankly and boldly challenge the tacit assumption in economics and politics that the material interests must come first."

This chapter climaxes in the insistence "If, as has been shown, the disease is moral, the remedy to be sought is moral too, and who can offer that remedy more authoritatively and effectively than the Christian Church as interpreter of the mind of Christ?" "I am convinced, however, that wherever and whenever an industry which is rendering a necessary public service becomes a monopoly which is exploited for private profit, there some form of public possession and direction is justified." "Or if any such service can be rendered more efficiently and economically by the community, the responsibility for it should be assumed. A process, slow but sure, of socialization seems to be inevitable." "The Christian Church would, in my judgment, be rash, and so betraying its trust as guide of society, in identifying itself with *collectivism*, much as it may appreciate the need of as thorough change as collectivism demands, and approve the motive of desire for the common good which animated many advocates of collectivism. Christianity must always stand for individual liberty and responsibility; and the social obligations which sonship toward God and brotherhood to man inspire for their value must be freely rendered for love, not enforced by law. If the control which a complete system of collectivism would involve did not command the consent of the conscience of the community generally, it would be an intolerable tyranny; if conscience assented, so complete legal control would not be necessary: legislation should be educative rather than provocative or coercive."

In his consideration of The Christian Ideal, of which space will not permit a proper presentation, the author of this extraordinary book states, "The one recurrent question for the Christian conscience, enlightened

enough to understand the method of Jesus, is this: Not which moral principle is here applicable, and how, but what will give love its fullest expression and freest exercise." Doctor Garvie seeks to summarize this chapter himself, as follows: "In the preceding chapter the endeavor was made to describe the Christian ideal, the divine reality of perfection as revealed in Christ. What this chapter must essay to do is to translate the ultimate ideal into the immediate applications of it in individual duty and corporate obligation in response to the urgent challenge of the world crisis."

He considers *The Christian Conscience* in the last chapter, and urges, out of an understanding of the recognition by Jesus of the bodily needs of men, that we must "afford a solid basis for the demand that an adequate provision be made in any society that lays claim to be Christian in motive and conduct to meet all the physical necessities of all its members." Of the ruling principles in this Christian conduct, we find the following mentioned: "Man shall be treated as infinitely more valuable than things." "In the provision of bodily wants and in the preservation of the worth of human personality, the differences of sex, class, culture, nation, and race shall be transcended." "Only self-denial and self-sacrifice can meet the challenge." "The Christian motive of equal love to self and neighbor, rooted in, growing out of, and kept alive by the absolute love to God, be insisted on as alone efficient and sufficient to secure and sustain Christian conduct as it has been so far described."

It is little wonder that the Dean of Manchester has said, "This is the greatest book Doctor Garvie has ever written." It will prove to be of real help to the harassed preacher in these days, who is buffeted by the pronouncements of the technically trained economist and made restive by ethical demands that lie at the heart of the Christian religion. This is indeed a striking book. Without resort to clever phraseology, without dodging issues, without being dogmatic, this author asks the question, "Can Christ save society?" and answers it in the affirmative, relying upon sound scholarship, simplicity of utterance, and old-fashioned honesty.

Book Reviews

I Follow the Road. A Modern Woman's Search for God. By ANNE BYRD PAYSON. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.

THERE are three disconnected and broken passages in this book which give as suggestive a picture of its subject matter as can be put in brief compass. The first is from the Introduction, written by E. Stanley Jones. After informing us that the author is a "Society" woman, whom he had met under what seemed at the time to be rather discouraging conditions, he continues,

"I soon found that the author of this book belonged to the bantering, mocking type. Again and again I heard her use the word 'amusing' both of men and things. I could see she was used to mocking at almost everything with a rapierlike cleverness. . . . The woman was well read and at home in the latest in music and art and literature. Her conversation at the table had scintillated with remote references. . . . 'Somebody inveigled me into reading your book, *The Christ of the Indian Road*,' she began. . . . 'I have had no connection with religion except perhaps to have a cocktail now and then with the rector in my country home.'"

The second passage is the author's own description of her "shining hour."

"It was then that Christ's presence shone within me—I knew myself to be a thought in his mind. No sight or sound announced it, no vision and no voice; but a bright hour rose from the wet and dark of the sleeping city.

In a new sense of protection I dared face thoughts from which I habitually ran away and dared review tragedies by the light of a defined and increasing radiance. When the first stirrings of the household came and I went back to bed, I prayed; prayed that I might never forget or vulgarize that lovely hour."

The third indicates the point of spiritual progress at which the author has arrived as she closes the story.

"It isn't likely that I can be mistaken for a saintly person in these pages or in life. I could not be, for mine is not the excess of grace that meets every man's need as well as my own. But instead of being a woman who chose to dwell in a tower of ivory—slightly discolored—I am at least a person of purpose to whom Christ is joy, whose activities join ever so faintly the hope of beauty that is the quest of gifted youth."

The book is a voice from a world to which, if the church has not deliberately closed its eyes, at any rate it has never given much attention—a world of brilliant and gifted people, with a wide and genuine culture, who often conceal behind an air of sophistication hearts that hunger. From her place in that world, a place manifestly secure had she chosen to remain in it, the author has gone upon an adventure. The trails she has followed are dimly marked, the seas she has sailed scarcely charted at all. Nevertheless, in working out a technic of spiritual attainment in unusual patterns she has come to a thrilling discovery.

Plenty of people, I suppose, will miss

the significance of her book. It would not be strange if people who can think of religious attainment only in the terms of church activity should miss it. Even more likely would it be that teachers and preachers who all unconsciously have allowed Christ to become locked up in ecclesiastical and theological straight-jackets should miss it. And, of course, those charmed by the author's attractive style, who read only to displace the vacuum of an idle hour, will miss it.

But the significance is there, I had almost written, tremendous in its implication. Let it go at that. Here is the sense of futility and frustration in which many to-day are lost, suddenly shot through with purpose and beauty. Here is a genuineness in narration that is immensely refreshing; and for the complete freedom of the book from anything suggestive of pious pose every reader will be grateful.

Having read it, and then because something of its naïve and unconventional earnestness has drawn me back to read it again, it leaves with me an admonition it nowhere expresses, a plea it nowhere puts in words. That admonition, that plea is that our Christ shall be set free; that the entanglements in which all unmeaningly we have managed to enmesh him shall be cleared away—and as in the long ago he moved freely among all sorts of people, so once again he will be free to go where the multitude abides still untaught.

I cannot see how anyone interested in the human response to this fascinating play of conflicting forces we call our modern world, can very well afford to miss this book.

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The Challenge of Humanism. By
LOUIS J. A. MERCIER. New York:
Oxford University Press. \$3.

PROFESSOR Louis J. A. Mercier wrote the unusually discriminating minute on the life and services of Professor Irving Babbitt which was placed upon the records of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University at the meeting of October 3, 1933. His book, *Le Mouvement Humaniste Aux États-Unis* (Hatchette, Paris, 1928), was crowned by the French Academy. And now his English volume, *The Challenge of Humanism: An Essay in Comparative Criticism*, is published by the Oxford University Press, New York. In soundness of scholarship, in wealth of erudition, and in clearness and cogency of thought, this volume at once takes its place as a really commanding achievement. As an interpretation of the critical humanism of Irving Babbitt and Dr. Paul Elmer More, the studies found in this book have a certain authority. The discussion of the work of Baron Ernest Seilliere will bring the criticism of this brilliant French writer to many English readers who will be glad to have a more intimate knowledge of his mind. The great movement away from naturalism receives effective description and interpretation in this volume. And the streams of European critical thought flow through the book in fascinating and fructifying fashion. The Neo-scholastic movement is described with understanding and sympathy. Many readers will feel that the volume is the beginning of a course of training for citizenship in a larger intellectual world than they have known. A good many contemporary critics have an odd habit of generalizing upon an utterly inadequate basis. From this weakness the work of Professor Mercier is happily free. His book may

almost be described as a tiny university in one volume.

To an American, perhaps the most fascinating thing about these studies is the fashion in which Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More are placed in relation to this large background of European thought. They are seen easily and without strain to hold their own with the great masters of criticism. In a sense they are seen as European figures rather than merely as citizens of this Republic. It goes without saying that very few writers whose work has been done on this side of the Atlantic could meet the test of comparison with the supreme figures of criticism as these men do. And it is a matter of not ignoble pride that in our time this Republic has produced two critics who can take their place among the masters of the craft in the judgment of a scholar and thinker of such sophisticated intelligence as Professor Mercier.

The relation of critical humanism to religion comes in for ample discussion. Many a reader deeply interested in the interpretation of the Christian religion will feel that his next intellectual enterprise must be a mastery of Dr. Paul Elmer More's notable series of studies on the Greek Tradition with their profound interpretation of the incarnation and their fresh approaches to the vitalities of the Christian faith. In only a few places does Professor Mercier write as a member of the Latin communion rather than from the position of an impartial criticism. The fairness and the largeness of spirit which characterize the book will commend it to the reader's most serious attention.

In the midst of the flux of modern life the disciplined voices which speak in the name of the whole intellectual experience of the world and which uplift

the standards which authenticate themselves upon the very field of experience, achieve a high and commanding authority. To this rare company Professor Mercier belongs. This last product of his pen is one which the serious reader simply cannot afford to miss.

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH.

Drew University.

A History of the Christian Church.

By LARS P. QUALBEN. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons. \$2.50.

To those of us who are particularly interested in giving to the history of religion in America fair and adequate attention this volume will prove heartening. Here, for the first time in a volume professing to cover the entire history of the Christian Church, the American Churches are given space in proportion to their importance. Of the five hundred and seventy-one pages of text, one hundred and seventy pages are devoted to a more or less detailed account of the development of organized religion in the United States. While some of us would commend the allotment of enlarged space to the American religious scene the more orthodox teachers of Church History would no doubt deplore the lack of space given to the Medieval Church. Since we are talking about the sins of omission in Church History texts it might be well to call attention to the fact that neither the Church in Hispanic America, nor in Canada, have ever been given the attention they deserve. In this particular volume Hispanic America is barely mentioned, nor is there anything like an adequate European background presented for an understanding of Spanish Christianity in the New World. The great name of Cardinal Ximenes does not appear in the index, nor does the

name of the great Dominican apostle to the Indians of the New World, Las Casas. Canada is likewise almost completely overlooked, the United Church of Canada, perhaps the most significant experiment in church union in our times, rating but three lines. But of course it is too much to expect of one author to fill in all the neglected places.

Professor Qualben has designed his book for classroom use, and the helps for the student at the end of each chapter evidence the fact that he well understands the art of presenting historical materials. Here are found review questions, topics for special study and a selected bibliography. The bibliographies contain the more recent secondary materials in English, though there is of course difference of opinion as to the best and most useful books in any given period.

Numerous misprints and minor mistakes are to be found throughout the volume, but the author, no doubt, has already noted most of them. More serious, however, are numerous misstatements of fact. We learn (p. 419) that Methodist immigrants came to Virginia in the early thirties of the eighteenth century and that the cordial relation between the Methodists and the Virginia officials made Whitefield's visit in 1739 and 1740 possible. Those who support the Maryland priority claim will no doubt want to believe this statement, but of course there were no Methodists in Virginia nor anywhere else in America in 1739. Nor did Whitefield bring the Great Awakening to America (p. 359); nor did Wesley give the English societies in 1784 the right to administer the sacraments, nor invest in the English "General Conference all the authority he had personally exercised." The above are examples of inaccuracies which are to be found throughout the volume, and

which the author and publisher will no doubt be glad to correct.

W. W. SWEET.

The University of Chicago.

Facing Our Day. By WILLIAM CHALMERS COVERT. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.50.

HE must read as he runs, this man of God going about his Lord's errands, for he has picked up facts from many sources and put them down in engaging sequence. A wise scribe he—"things new and old."

Doctor Covert has been a pastor. There is a human interest quality in this book, like to that in its author's heart. He is a practical administrator; common sense and realism are in the pages—and between the lines. Some of the obvious is here also—who could face our day without it? There is discernment, too; historical ("The Franciscans were the Salvation Army of their day") and contemporary ("Mingled with its absurdities are elements of spiritual reality . . . which are bringing to men new powers . . . and victories"—this of Christian Science).

The educational ideal had persisted in the habit of this minister. Moreover, he has a great fund of information. Any who are charged with the duty of public speaking will find many suggestive facts for purposes of illustration.

The economic and political insurgency of our times is not adequately reflected, but every cultural interest is, and that, likely, is the author's intention. To be sure, the Machine Age has its chapter, but the reviewer feels that our author sees our day as educationally conscious rather than as economically distraught. This may be an unfair judgment of an erstwhile active Bull Moose!

To summarize the book one should

use many quotation marks. (I omit them in deference to the printer's case.) Leisure has come in our day, with it books galore and newspapers; also religious cults and faith healing, allied to a new psychology. We have had a decade of reviving musical appreciation and are living in a time (be it day or hour) of poignant spiritual hunger and expectancy.

Frankly, on a churchman's scale our day is weighed and found not, entirely, wanting. It is a just balance though that of the sanctuary and, in the main, a troy scale is indicated rather than an avoirdupois.

Yes, our author *is* a reader. A fine bibliography is appended.

JESSE R. HALSEY.

The Seventh Presbyterian Church,
East Walnut Hills, Cincinnati.

Karl Barth and Christian Unity.

The Influence of the Barthian Movement upon the Churches of the World. By ADOLF KELLER, D.D., LL.D. Translated in collaboration with Professor Werner Petersmann, Th.D., by the Reverend Manfred Manrodt and revised by Dr. A. J. Macdonald; with an Introduction by Luther A. Weigle, Ph.D., of the Divinity School, Yale University. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.75.

AFTER having read this book a second time, the reviewer finds it difficult to do justice to it in a brief article. The book needs to be read and re-read if one is to obtain the benefit of the wealth of its content.

It presupposes that the reader has a general knowledge of the Barthian Theology and of the distinctive genius and the theological tendencies of the churches

at the present time. The author is prepared, as perhaps no one else, to discuss the relation between the distinctive teaching of Karl Barth and his associates. By virtue of his office as Secretary of the European Central Bureau of Relief for the Church in Geneva, Switzerland, he has come into personal contact with the churches of Europe and America; knows not only their history but their present status and condition; is acquainted with their leading ministers and professors, has worshiped in their congregations; and has spoken in their General Synods and Assemblies. He knows the churches, not merely as they originated, but as they now live and think and work.

Moreover, he is a thorough scholar, trained in theology, philosophy, and science in German and Swiss universities; he lectures in the University of Zurich and of Geneva; he has lived through the period of the beginning, growth, and spread of the Barthian Theology; he is personally acquainted with Karl Barth, Brunner, Thurneysen, and Gogarten; last, but not least, he is in sympathy with the Barthian movement and at the same time with the trend toward closer co-operation of the churches throughout the world.

His purpose is not to expound the theology of Barth; that has been done sufficiently in numerous books, tracts, and articles during the last decade. He assumes that the reader has at least a general knowledge of its doctrines. With this assumption he proceeds to describe the effect of its teachings upon the churches of Europe and America—of Switzerland, Germany, Scandinavia, Holland, France and Latin Protestantism, England, Scotland, America; also upon the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church of the East. In

the space of twelve years the influence of the Dialectical Theology has spread from Switzerland, the land of its birth, westward to America and eastward to India, China, Korea, Japan. In these countries it is discussed in addresses, articles, pamphlets, and books of many languages. The author, therefore, raises questions like these: How is this theology received by the several churches? What part of it, if any, is congenial to their genius and spirit? What objections are raised against it? And what compromises are made with it? To what extent will it become a permanent possession of the churches?

In the last part of the book, Chapters VII to IX, he shows the relation of the Barthian Theology to foreign missions, to contemporary life and thought, and to the movement toward closer co-operation of the churches, especially as brought to light by the Conference on Life and Work at Stockholm, 1925, and the Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne, 1927.

An original and illuminating comparison is drawn between the theological and the ecumenical movement, both of which originated in the same decade and now course in parallel currents through the churches. Both are assumed to be superdenominational, supernatural, superconfessional, and supertheological; and on that account they are a challenge to each church, Catholic and Protestant, to define its attitude toward the worldwide movement for closer fellowship of the churches and to advance beyond confessionalism, dogmatism, and liberal humanism to the essentials of evangelical Christianity.

At present, however, it is difficult for the churches to define their position toward both these phenomena; for it is not quite clear what the ecumenical

movement as a whole involves and, furthermore, there is widespread and profound misunderstanding of the Barthian Theology. The author, however, contends that it is of the utmost importance that the ecumenical movement take to heart seriously the questions raised by this school of theologians, as for example, by Barth in his Berlin address on *Die Noth der evangelische Kirche* (The Need of the Evangelical Church); and that the critical theologians in turn take cognizance of the issues raised by the ecumenical movement. Both show the churches the critical situation in which they are now placed, from which there is only one and the same way out—the way of God as revealed in his word. The churches are to come to a knowledge of the massiveness and seriousness of the world problems, the solution of which exceeds men's ability. Their only hope and help is to turn to the living God.

This is the tragedy of the church, that it faces issues that are beyond its power to control and yet it is driven to lay hands to the task by the need of man, the demand of the Spirit, and the knowledge of the gospel. The dialectical theologians seek to convince the churches that they are in conditions which, humanly speaking, they can neither escape nor transform; and, therefore, their only refuge and hope is in God, who alone can save man and establish his kingdom.

The ecumenical movement, likewise, enters the present situation of the churches and the world with no preconceived solution, with no sense of power, but only with faith that God is present, with hope in his coming into man's night, inability and despondency, and with confidence in the Holy Spirit who is promised us—*Veni Creator Spiritus*.

The author is somewhat hesitant about

humanism and the almost desperate activism of the American churches; yet he looks forward in hope that the time is not far off when "America also will come . . . to a turning and returning to that God who is a dangerous question and whom the creature cannot dodge either by a cosmology, or by a humanistic attenuation of self or by social efficiency."

This book serves a threefold purpose: 1. To obtain an insight into the present faith and order of the different churches; 2. to follow the Barthian theology in its spread over the earth and the stir it creates wherever it is read and expounded; 3. to catch a glimpse of the close relation of the so-called ecumenical movement among the churches in Stockholm and Lausanne, and the recent prophetic movement in the churches, which is far more than a theological system, of which Karl Barth is the original prophet.

GEORGE W. RICHARDS.

Theological Seminary of the
Reformed Church in the United States.
Lancaster, Pa.

America's Social Morality. By JAMES
HAYDEN TUFTS. New York:
Henry Holt and Company. \$3.00.

SEVERAL weighty contributions in the field of ethics appeared last year. One has but to recall Brightman's *Moral Laws* and Cabot's *The Meaning of Right and Wrong*. Scarcely was 1934 under way before two similar books came to take us by surprise. One was A. K. Rogers' *Ethics and Moral Tolerance*, which re-examines the basis of ethics with originality. The other is the book here under review. The thoughtful perusal of these four volumes ought to equip one superbly for giving moral guidance. In one way, this book is the

most indispensable of the quartet. It comes freighted with statistics. Its illustrations are *situations*. It is only in the light of these that the other three books can efficiently stand us in stead.

This amazing study of the dilemmas of our changing mores is no alarmist utterance. Just because of this it reveals how much there is to be alarmed about! It opens with a recital of the factors that go into the making of social morality. No easy or popular interpretations are accepted. Careful inquiry is made into what the American citizen really values. These values are set against those that obtain elsewhere (work, which our mores strongly approve, is by no means universally accepted). The use of leisure remains a problem, though signs are not wanting that we are getting somewhere. When we turn to race and class, our dilemmas begin to get into full stride. Ethics is a feeble fence against these mighty forces. If it gets anywhere with them, it will be only because it is buttressed by economic, educational, scientific forces. The prevalence of suicides (most of which, by the way, are Protestants!) is a thermometer that shows our tragic social illness. For America, divorce may yet save marriage from more fundamental changes. When one reads Doctor Tufts' account of the moral dilemmas faced by business and industry—an account that is simply phenomenal for fairness—one's heart sinks! Who shall deliver us from the body of this death? Still, there is this to be said for the American temper. It meets "economic injustices rather through legal action than through a complete upset and reconstruction of the economic basis of institutions."

From the beginning of our history, conflicting concepts of the state and of

government have been held. We are not yet out of the woods. But the atmosphere is clearing. We are beginning to see what is involved. The popular notion that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor has all too much to support it. We are to see the criminal from our viewpoint of success. If wealth is the mark of success, why should he not seek it in the way that is open? But the core of our lawlessness probably is reached when we discover that there has been no adequate revision of our criminal procedure since the foundation of our government. Much could be done with drink, gambling and prostitution were our statutes not such anachronisms. Doctor Tufts illustrates our relations to other peoples by our abominable treatment of the Indian. The study is concluded with a searching survey of the relation between public and private morals. The views of Hadley, Niebuhr and Bergson are scrutinized. Finally, a hopeful note is struck about American vitality.

The book is well written. One could wish that on some issues, such as that of the conscientious objector, there had been a fuller discussion. Yet where is there a book which contains more concrete data concerning our moral predicaments? It might be described as a handy encyclopedia of social problems. But this would hardly do it justice, since it also contains indications toward definite remedies.

JOHN M. VERSTEEG.

Walnut Hills-Avondale Church,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

God at Work: A Study of the Supernatural. By WILLIAM ADAMS BROWN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

It should not be difficult for the

modern Christian to agree with the author in most of his value judgments. The discussion is, as we should expect, scholarly, and there is a spiritual warmth about it and a care for the vital essence of personal religion which make one wish that the book might be widely read. One is grateful too for the sympathetic, discriminating appraisal of such significant contemporary movements as Barthianism, Anglo-Catholicism, and the "First Century Christian Fellowship."

But there is the proverbial fly in the ointment. In clearness and distinctness the ideas of "miracle" and "the supernatural," with which the discussion is fundamentally concerned, leave much to be desired—perhaps in part by very reason of the elaborateness and catholicity of the discussion itself. To begin with, the term supernatural is given three distinct and different meanings: the personal as such; the creative, or unpredictable; and the normative, or perfect. The term is further defined as including "all that can be known of God through nature, as well as exceptional activities which it is impossible to bring under law." Thus the supernatural is distinguished from the natural and yet made to include much of the natural. On the one hand the identification of the supernatural with the miraculous is decried as having been largely responsible for the difficulty which so many modern men find with supernatural religion, while on the other hand miracle itself is declared to be a normal and permanent element in religious experience. It is freely conceded that our changed modern view of nature, making room as it does for creative evolution and real freedom, makes the old use of the term supernatural unmeaning. And yet, it is argued, we should cling to the old term, on the ground that the supernatural is the basic

concept of religion, that to give up the idea of the supernatural would be to give up the idea of God at work in the world and intimately in the lives of men.

This term supernatural, the author admits, is a "rusty tool." We are inclined to doubt whether it is as "useful" an instrument as he imagines, even after having been gone over, and refurbished with the loving antiquarian care manifested in this book. The crux of the religious problem, as some of us see it to-day, is not the retention of this confused and confusing term "supernatural," but the retention of a sincere and genuine theism. If, as Professor Brown asserts, to say of God that he is supernatural is to say that he is like us in being self-conscious and self-determining spirit, why not content ourselves with the latter less ambiguous statement? If what is now called "naturalism" offers no objection to the concepts of creative evolution and creatively free personal activity, why not recognize that the real issue for religion is that between naturalistic atheism and naturalistic theism? This may seem like going to the opposite extreme; but if the term "supernaturalistic" were to be dropped from constructive modern theology, its scientific critics would no doubt eventually drop their polemical term "naturalistic" also.

D. C. MACINTOSH.

Yale University.

Henry Codman Potter. By JAMES SHEERIN. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company. \$2.

HERE is a very interesting biography of a militant and statesman bishop. The picture is drawn by a man not only thoroughly familiar with his subject, but who had in addition an intimate personal knowledge of the religious and social

conditions which existed in New York City during the period when Doctor Potter was bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The bishop is described as an aristocrat and an autocrat and at the same time as a gentle and friendly personality who could be in equally affectionate relationships with the poorest as well as the richest of his associates.

No great social gathering in New York could be carried on without the presence of Bishop Potter. He was present at the speakers' table when important meetings were held by universities, or hospitals or art museums, and in other events of civic importance. His influence with the rich and powerful was recognized. On the other hand, when the Labor movement, or the Social Settlement workers, or those interested in reform of city government wanted a leader who could be depended on for a brave support of their ideals, this same bishop was ready to serve any and every cause that aimed toward the improvement of the unfortunate or the oppressed. The poor of his great parish were ever near his heart, and the rich were constantly reminded of their stewardship. No city in the world ever made greater contributions toward human benevolence than New York, during the years of his influence.

His scathing rebuke of Tammany Hall during the Van Wyck administration will be remembered. During the summer months he lived in the slums of Stanton Street in the place of a young clergyman who had been oppressed by the police department for calling attention to the flagrant violations of the law in permitting brothels to flourish. The bishop took up the young clergyman's cause, demanded of the mayor immediate reforms, and succeeded. He could

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always be relied on for such courageous personal action in the interests of justice and his leadership was sought by Jew and Catholic as well as by Protestants of every name because he was a citizen as well as a churchman.

In the administration of the ecclesiastical affairs of his diocese he was always known as a liberal in his theological opinions. He welcomed Doctor Briggs into the ministry of the Episcopal Church at a time when he was threatened with a heresy trial by the Presbyterians. He supported the radical Dr. Heber Newton when there was a clamorous demand for his deposition. He was a great admirer of the liberty of thought and worship offered by his own church, but protested urgently against those clergymen who repudiated the values of the English reformation. As a bishop he used his power and influence to encourage and enlarge the work of his clergymen, and never to oppress them by demanding conformity to his own opinions. Toward the ministry of other denominations he always exercised the courtesy of the finest Christian fellowship and encouraged the fullest co-operation between the churches in every effort for human betterment.

The Episcopal Church in America has had a few outstanding bishops who have commended the importance and dignity of their office and leadership, men of large vision, of great ability, of broad sympathy, of deep evangelical piety; such men as Brent, Williams, Brooks, Lawrence and Henry Codman Potter. By their nobility of character they have commended their Christianity and the church.

Mr. Sheerin has done his work well and has given us a vivid and charming portrait of a great personality who was

largely gifted with wisdom, faith, sympathy, courage and humor.

ROBERT ROGERS.

Church of the Good Shepherd,
Brooklyn, New York.

Edwin Markham. By WILLIAM L. STIDGER. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.50.

I HAVE known Dr. Edwin Markham intimately for more than twelve years. I have read all of his published works, not once but several times. Now I am called upon to review the book on my good white comrade penned by another long-time friend of mine.

Mine is a pleasant task—also difficult, lest I allow myself to use superlatives too freely. When I finished the book I was truly sorry, for while reading I had felt as if the dynamic personality of Edwin Markham were with me all the time. Doctor Stidger most certainly has succeeded in recreating the Markhamian atmosphere.

In the future, no student of Markham can call himself a Markham scholar without having read and digested the contents of this book. For much of it was written *verbatim* as it gushed from the poet-philosopher. I could almost hear my friend's booming, pleading, haunting voice as I read aloud the sentences, paragraphs and whole pages of his own words.

It is the life story of the man who saw one April afternoon a picture of Millet's famous painting, "The Man With the Hoe." It was that painting that roused the sensitive social-conscious soul of the schoolmaster who thirteen years later wrote about "the man at the bottom of the ladder."

Doctor Stidger tells graphically how on that April afternoon in 1886 Markham wrote the first stanza of the Im-

mortal Poem of Social Protest. Markham did not complete the poem, however, until after he had seen the original Millet painting, for it was in 1900 that he wrote a stanza a day for five consecutive days.

Markham refused to send the manuscript to any magazine because "it had enough dynamite in it to blow up most of the social traditions of our civilization." We owe gratitude to the daring Bailey Millard, then Sunday editor of the *San Francisco Examiner*, for bringing to light the greatest social poem of the twentieth century. It is true Whitman gave social poems to the world, and that Joaquin Miller stammered socially, but it was Markham whose voice protested and thundered across and around the world. What is more, ever since January 15, 1899, Edwin Markham has been the voice of the American Forgotten Man—yes, I who know him well, dare say the protesting voice of the world's forgotten men, women and children. To those who would challenge my world-including statement I say, read his "Children in Bondage," his "Shoes of Happiness," his "California, the Wonderful," his "The Gates of Paradise," "Lincoln, the Man of the People," and his "Eighty Songs at 80."

Admirably does Doctor Stidger describe the fine lyric power of the poet. Markham, who is his own severest critic, looks upon his lyric "Virgilia" as his favorite. It is indeed a lyric of haunting beauty.

The reader instinctively feels that Stidger knows and knows well his hero and for him has genuine and deep-rooted admiration and love. Yet he does not allow his great admiration for the white-haired poet to blur his vision or dull his pen. He paints Markham "warts and all." I who also have entertained him

in our home many a time never could accuse the poet of "stealing" (see pages 92 and 93) books. Doctor Stidger is not the only one who has a large library where the poet's feet have trod and where his fingers have lingered fondly over the multi-colored bindings. Here the reviewer quarrels with the biographer and he happens to know that the poet felt and feels keenly the accusation, even though facetiously made. How much books mean to Markham is briefly told in the chapter "From the Great of Old." He reveals the thirteen favorite books of Markham and his choices do not surprise us—rather we expected these and would have been greatly disappointed had he made other suggestions. Indeed, so great is Markham's love for books that in his own words he informs the reader, "You will find me browsing around in the libraries of the Spiritual Universe."

One of the great chapters in the book is "The Ballad of the Gallowsbird"—the story of a lost soul who is the hero of the poem. That chapter contains much literary news hitherto not printed—although the poem was published in the August, 1926, number of *Mercury*. Since then the reviewer knows of many additions and subtractions that have been made by the author, who firmly believes that the poem of the "Gallowsbird" will outlive and outshine "The Man With the Hoe."

Doctor Stidger, throughout his biography of Markham, makes the reader feel the strong and positive religious life that is the poet's. From his volume "The Man With the Hoe" (1899) to "Eighty Songs at 80" (1932), there runs a golden thread of a great and an abiding faith. Never will the reviewer forget the afternoon spent in the company of the poet at the country home of Owen D. Young. Seated before an

open fireside, with the rosy glow of burning logs reflected in the white beard and head of the poet, he heard him read "Christus," "The Nailtorn Christ," "A Little Creed," and some others. Here were a world renowned statesman-lawyer, a world famous poet and a young preacher, and so real was the poet's reading that we all felt the presence of the "Christus." It was not surprising to hear Mr. Young ask the poet if he might read the poem at his commencement address at Radcliffe College, and I shall never forget the look of appreciation that came from the black and kindly eyes of the eighty-year-old Social Prophet and Poet.

Doctor Stidger is the first biographer of Edwin Markham. The lovers of Markham owe him a great deal, and I am sure that all future Markham biographers will have to turn again and again to this first biography for color, dates, and other valuable agenda. We do not say it is the greatest Markham biography that will ever be written. We do say it is a splendid Markham book that will endure. It is a stirring biography of one who is worthy of his lineage—one who at the height of eighty years sings:

"The brute man of the planet, he will
pass,
Vanish like breath of vapor on a glass;
And from his quaking pulp of life will
rise
The Superman, child of the higher skies,
God-quicken'd, he will break these
mortal bars,
Laugh and reach out his hands among
the stars."

CORNELIUS GREENWAY.
All Souls Universalist Church,
Brooklyn, New York.

The Nature of Religion. By GEORG WOBBERMIN. Translated from the German by T. H. Menzee and D. S. Robinson. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. \$3.50.

It is to be regretted that the highly instructive works of this eminent theologian were not sooner made accessible to the English-speaking public. For I doubt whether they can now be as directly useful as they would have been a few years ago.

The theological discussion of the immediate future will most probably be concentrated upon the problem, whether the understanding and interpretation of the Christian religion is to proceed on the basis of the confrontation of the church with the gospel of Jesus Christ or on the basis of a philosophy of religion which takes its materials from the history and the psychology of religions, and keeps in close touch with the developments in the realm of natural science and metaphysics.

I, personally, am inclined to think that the oncoming generation will place the emphasis of its theological labor upon problems of an ecclesiastical theology. Throughout the Protestant world, I believe, a shift in theological thought will take place that will be in correspondence to (or perhaps in imitation of) the reorientation of continental European theology from Schleiermacher to the reformers, and through them to the whole of Christian tradition. In other words, we shall again be faced by the problem of a "confessional" theology.

In such a "narrowing" of the theological horizon, the tremendous labor of the Protestant theologians since Schleiermacher will, of course, have to be presupposed. Books like this of Professor Wobbermin will, therefore, continue to

exert a profound influence, but they will no longer be as "normative" for theological work as they were for the last and the present generations.

It cannot be denied that this work on the essence of religion is one of the finest fruits of "modern" theology. In it Professor Wobbermin offers a remarkably balanced discussion of the nature and the truth of religion in obedience to the psychological method as formulated by Schleiermacher, supplementing and correcting it by the extensive knowledge of religious psychology (James!) and history which has been accumulated since the beginning of the last century, clarifying and defending it also by constant critical interchange with the theories and teachings of the "modern" theologians.

In this discussion it is assumed (and "proved") that a scientific analysis of religious experience is possible, and that on the basis of this analysis the truth of religion can be maintained against (and in harmony with) natural science and philosophy. At the same time, the claim of the uniqueness of the Christian religion is asserted and upheld. (To this topic Professor Wobbermin has devoted a whole volume, entitled *The Nature and the Truth of the Christian Religion*, which, I hope, will also soon be translated.)

Thus, the philosophy of religion and Christian theology are combined. And the question which the younger generation of theological thinkers must make its own is whether they shall approach the life and thought of the church of the future by maintaining this combination in which the philosophy of religion is essential, or by a rediscovery of the meaning of the Christian dogma of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, in connection with which a philosophy of

religion is either a consequence or an afterthought.

Whatever the decision or tendency of the new day will be, a study of Wobbermin will be most rewarding, for he writes with great circumspection and with unusual clarity, and, most significantly, he does not dodge important issues.

The translators must be thanked for their excellent work. Few German theological books have been rendered into such fluent, competent English.

WILHELM PAUCK.

Chicago Theological Seminary.

The Church Looks Ahead. American Protestant Christianity. An Analysis and a Forecast. Edited by CHARLES E. SCHOFIELD. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.00.

DOCTOR SCHOFIELD has done a service by touching off the distinguished writers whose separate analyses and forecasts make up this symposium. The bringing out of symposia is not what it used to be—and perhaps "never was" as the saying goes (one editor confessed that he would have "saved himself some trouble" if he had "written the whole thing himself" instead of keeping after the *symposers*), but there is a place for such, even on the book table. And surely if the multifarious and many-fringed processes, doctrines, and institutions of American Protestant Christianity are to be charted as to present location, and predicted as to future course, more than one mind must be called upon and more than one observation post manned. What is "the Church" which "looks ahead," and with what shall we equate "American Protestant Christianity"? Wisely enough this book does not say. It simply collates the specific

views of a number of men, each of whom, like a good umpire, "calls it as he sees it," and lets it go at that. Get Joseph M. M. Gray of the American University, Wilson G. Cole of Brooklyn, President Arlo Ayres Brown of Drew, Dr. Schofield himself, Fred Winslow Adams of Boston University, and Lynn Harold Hough of Drew to bring in the first six chapters, and the book is off to a start that keeps it in the clear for almost four hundred pages.

The volume is divided into three main sections: "A—The Mission of the Christian Movement"—which among other chapters contains, "The Sacraments" (by Gray—provoking); "Preaching and Worship"; "Evangelism"; "The Cure of Souls"; "Priest and Prophet" (by Hough—good).

"B—The Message of the Gospel"—containing, "Personal Religion" (by Raymond Calkins—fine chapter); "Social Gospel"; "The Contemporary Note in Theology" (by Edwin Lewis—splendid chapter); "The Bible To-day and To-morrow" (Quimby—good).

"C—The Method of Organized Christianity"—"Church Architecture" (Conover, of "Methodism-going-Gothic" fame); "Religious Journalism" (Editor Mills, *Pacific Edition, Christian Advocate*); "The Church College"; "The Country Church"; "City Church"; "Christian Unity"; "And so on"—as the editor heads his last chapter. These are but fragmentary references to a few of the twenty-two chapters. The work of course must be read to be appreciated.

The present growing discussion over the original meaning of the Sacraments is outlined by Dr. Gray in the first chapter—a discussion that bids fair to supersede the "nature and being of God" arguments which have been the more

recent foci of thought in speculative theology. Dr. Gray will doubtless find many who will take him up on some of his statements—to which he will in no way object. Dr. Diffendorfer of the Methodist Episcopal Board of Foreign Missions brings up the statistics and deploys figures all over his pages when he writes of the missionary enterprise—and has some heartening things to say. The writer got more out of Dr. Edwin Lewis' chapter than from any other, perhaps because Dr. Lewis drags a tremendously helpful and suggestive bibliography book by book into his article and passes upon each volume as he does so. To this reviewer there was unusual significance in what Dr. Raymond Calkins termed "The Return of the Soul." There does seem to be a definite and increasing emphasis among Protestant people calling for "a closer walk" with God. The outward institutionalizing and ordered regimentation of Protestant life seems to have back-fired, and the human spirit has recoiled upon itself. The immanence of God is being experienced, not after the smug "We are all sons of God" pattern, but after the age-long yearning to be clean within. Dr. Calkins mentions the Oxford Group Movement in this connection and is undoubtedly right in his declaration—"Religion for multitudes of people is becoming more and more personal."

Another sign of the times scarcely more than touched on in the book is the Barthian—let us say *reflection*. Although as far removed as possible from the idea of immanence and the "inner-light" philosophy, indications are not wanting that the note struck by Barth is cutting across contemporary theology. Austere and awesome as it is and driving head on toward what may prove to be as ironclad a transcendence as John Cal-

vin himself would have taught, nevertheless across the sterile shallows and vapid mists of modern non-authoritative religion, this stern theology, like the solemn sound of an iron bellbuoy off in the night, is insistently asserting that somewhere someone has found and marked a channel. As yet America hears scarcely more than an echo of Barth, but westward more things than stars of empire take their way.

Get the book. It is worth reading.

NOLAN B. HARMON, Jr.

Greene Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South,
Roanoke, Virginia.

The Career and Significance of Jesus.

By WALTER BELL DENNY. New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons. \$1.60.

THIS book is intended primarily for use in schools and colleges, and its educational purpose is always kept in mind. Each chapter is preceded by a passage for Bible study, with brief notes and questions to enable the student to read it intelligently. At the end of the chapter there is a further list of questions, touching on points of historical and religious interest which call for discussion. A short bibliography is appended to each chapter, and at the end of the book there are twelve colored maps. The needs of the young student are also consulted in the titles prefixed to every paragraph, and in the clear and interesting style, scholarly but not technical, which is employed throughout.

The book consists of two parts: (1) a Life of Jesus; (2) a number of chapters which deal with the sequel and significance of the life. Some of the problems raised in these chapters are too large for brief discussion, but the author has done well to impress on his students

that the life of Jesus embraces much more than the actual Gospel record.

Although intended as a college textbook the volume may be read profitably by all who desire a presentation of the life of Jesus which is constructive in the best sense and yet written in the full light of modern inquiry. Doctor Denny, indeed, maintains a number of positions which even radical scholars will find debatable. He holds, for instance, that Jesus' work had a bearing on the political controversy of his day, and that such a saying as "Love your enemies" was pointed at the Roman overlords. The apocalyptic reading of the message is repudiated, and Jesus is set before us purely as the revealer of the moral law. The cleansing of the Temple is regarded as "an audacious scheme to make a public raid" on the citadel of priestly religion, of which Jesus "seized control with the help of his friends." With views of this kind, scattered throughout the book, few scholars will agree. They do nothing to elucidate the history, and tend only to obscure its religious significance. For the most part, however, Doctor Denny's judgment is sound, and is often penetrating. Even in his aberrations he gives welcome proof of an original mind, grappling at first-hand with difficult problems. The book, while perfectly frank in its criticism, is written with religious feeling, which is all the more impressive because it is obviously sincere.

E. F. SCOTT.

Union Theological Seminary.

Christianity—the Paradox of God.

By DONALD MACKENZIE. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company. \$1.50.

THIS modest volume contains the James Sprunt Lectures for 1933 which were delivered at Union Theological

Seminary, Richmond, Va. Doctor Mackenzie is professor of theology in Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pa., and while these lectures were in process of publication accepted the invitation to join the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary, an indication of the fact that he is making a place for himself in fairly conservative circles.

Basic to the eight lectures which comprise the volume is the conviction that there is something paradoxical in our knowledge of nature, more in our knowledge of man and society, and most in our knowledge of God, or in "God in Christ—the Great Paradox of God." Almost half of the book is devoted to an interesting study of the nature and types of paradox. In this section Doctor Mackenzie draws attention to the decrease in dogmatic "cock-sureness" which formerly characterized the pronouncement of scientists of all types. This is due, he suggests, to the growing recognition of the presence of paradox in every field. Paradox may mean, in the first place, that which is contrary to current opinion (p. 43). Christianity is paradoxical because "it is contrary to current opinion, not simply at its worst, but at its best." It "strikes at the ordinary expectations of men, and turns the customary world upside down" (p. 47). The word paradox may also be used to "denote a situation or a reality concerning which contradictory statements can be made at one and the same time, with a show of truth" (p. 67). It is this meaning of the term which is most vital to the thought of Doctor Mackenzie. It is reminiscent of the thought of Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), the Danish philosopher and theologian whose conceptions live again, in some measure, in the Barthian school. Even as Kierkegaard insisted that there was an element of mystery, or paradox, in

all that one can say about God, Christ, and salvation—a reaction from the Hegelian attempt to simplify everything in terms of Absolute Idealism—so Doctor Mackenzie would insist that we recognize the limitations of human reason when dealing with these problems.

The spirit of the author as revealed in these pages is commendable. There is positive affirmation without offensive dogmatism. The use made of paradox in these lectures suggests possibilities of adding effectiveness to preaching, an end highly desirable. At the same time, there is danger that this attempt to describe Christianity as paradoxical will be taken by uncritical readers as an apologetic for assuming the truth of outmoded interpretations of the Christian faith. The presence of paradox in one field is not a logical justification for confusion of thought in other fields. Only where there is ample evidence that the apparent paradox is true paradox, as seems to be the case with the theories of the nature of light, can one insist upon Christianity as paradox. The emotional element in religion is so strong that anything which offers men an excuse to escape from the injunction in 1 Thessalonians 5. 21, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," will be accepted eagerly.

WILLIAM HENRY BERNHARDT.
The Iliff School of Theology.

Vital Control. By LYNN HAROLD HOUGH. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.00.

THE first sentence on the jacket is the key to Doctor Hough's purpose: "The Christian criticism of life and letters is the most important task now confronting the church." The sub-title on the inside title page, "Forest Essays, First Series," is happily prophetic. Doctor Hough has

in mind, as his friends know and his publishers now state, a series of volumes of essays which will be devoted to the Christian criticism of life and letters. It is a noble and alluring field, there will never be any exhausting it, no man of our generation is better fitted to undertake it.

This volume takes its title from a sentence in a discriminating study of Irving Babbitt with which it begins. Hough has been saying that there are two possible and sharply antithetic attitudes toward life: "the view of life which seeks in its experience the gratification of expansive emotion and the interpretation of life which finds its realization in the acceptance of masterful discipline." Babbitt made it his life work to urge in literature and criticism the quest for a masterful discipline; over against vital impulse he would put vital control; over against the *élan vital* he would put *frein vital*. The horses of our human chariots must be driven with some sort of strong rein. We have known that since Plato.

The representative minds of our time are all united in a search for the rein—or reins. They differ spaciouly in their conclusions; they are quite agreed about the need for some sort of check-rein, for the horses are strong and unruly and there is great danger that the chariot may get upset. Where and what is the creative control of life? All our political and social experiments are in the same direction. Doctor Hough believes the "vital control which possesses the creative enthusiasm of romanticism and the disciplined strength of classicism" will give us the best and save us from the worst of the two opposing movements in whose rip-tide Western civilization has been caught. And above and beyond this synthesis he believes Christianity is the supreme control. (See his *Evangelical Humanism*.)

It may be urged that such a criticism as is here proposed is too remote from the realistic confusion of the time to which it is addressed. Doctor Hough would certainly say in reply, first, that the principles he here brings out are the principles which must be used as a method of dealing with our present confusion; second, that a future volume proposes to deal with exactly the grounds of this hypothetical criticism, and finally, that here is just the road to those true values of life for the want of which we have fallen into confusion.

His third chapter, "Types of Humanism," develops his argument, discloses the range of his study, the glowing quality of his mind and opens up a region for comment no brief review can even begin to explore. The other nine chapters, various in heading, from "Gamaliel Bradford" and "Lawrence Hyde" to "Sin and Salvation," are the full play of Hough's thought upon men and books, minds and issues. They take their unity from his mind rather, perhaps, than from their necessary relation, and the added bibliographies—one for each chapter—add greatly to the value of the book. They indicate the sources from which the author draws his material for comment and the reading of them would be a liberal education. The result is brilliantly delightful.

There are from time to time men whose appointed task is to take into themselves some full current of their time and through their power to understand, fuse and interpret it, give it out again with heightened power and meaning for life. Doctor Hough possesses that faculty in a rare and quickening way. *Vital Control* proves it.

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS.
Auburn Theological Seminary.

Martin Luther, Oak of Saxony. By EDWIN P. BOOTH. New York: Round Table Press. \$2.50.

DOCTOR BOOTH has produced an admirable and very readable biography of the great Reformer. It is short, but it includes nearly every important phase of his life and work. It is a praiseworthy achievement in celebration of the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of his birth. The author discloses the qualities of genius in his happy combination of historic fact and human understanding. He knows the events of Luther's career and is well acquainted with the temperament of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Luther's life story is indeed romantic, but one wonders whether the author by his fertile imagination has not unduly magnified this side of it. He smooths over the great controversies in which Luther was involved too easily. There is a bit too much of the heroic about the work. In fact, one sees the portrait of a glorified Luther rather than that of the human Luther, a child of his age. We must never lose sight of the fact that it was the age and its characteristic difficulties that made the man. We miss that coarseness and ruggedness of character which made him capable of a passionate devotion to the truth as he understood it. He was above all else a man of conviction.

A few interesting facts are related which are not generally known. It is highly significant that the Elector Frederick of Saxony consulted Erasmus as to the validity of Luther's contentions before the Diet at Worms, and that the latter prepared twenty-two axioms demanding an impartial hearing for the Wittenberg professor. Then, too, it is often forgotten that Luther was formally condemned before the hearing

reluctantly granted him by Pope and Emperor at Worms. There is also a valuable sidelight on the character of Alexander, the Papal legate to the Diet, which affords us an excellent understanding of the general type of men who supported the Roman Curia. Another feature well brought out is that of the continual friendship between Staupitz and Luther. (See letters on pp. 134 and 175.) To be sure it was not an open friendship after the latter's break with Rome, but it was nevertheless real and appreciative. Staupitz reminds us much of Nicodemus in the fourth Gospel.

These are but a few of the many interesting features of the book. Its historic accuracy is unquestionable and I commend it to old and young alike. Its superb diction and its swiftly moving narrative thrill one to the core.

J. M. MYERS.

Lutheran Theological Seminary,
Gettysburg, Pa.

The Character Emphasis in Education. By K. L. HEATON. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. \$3.

THE book is largely descriptive of practical procedures for the schoolroom. This is natural enough, since the author is director of character education in the Pontiac (Michigan) schools. What psychology the volume contains is for the most part implicit, almost no attention being given to discussion of the psychological grounds for the materials and methods presented. Teachers who are looking for a handbook based on current school practice will find in the book much welcome help. Those who desire a fundamental treatment of the meaning of character and personality and the principles of their development will be disappointed. Stated differently,

the chief contribution of the book is to practice rather than to scientific orientation in its field.

Its twenty chapters are grouped in six parts: I, How the teacher may use the regular curriculum to secure character values; II, Units of instruction which have character education as their major aim; III, Clubs and other pupil activities; IV, Individual guidance; V, School administration as related to the development of character; VI, Home and community influences.

Especially strong is the book in the use made of current literature on character education. The various Year Books, Manuals, Reports, and related treatises on education are freely cited and generously quoted. Helpful particularly are the lists of reading references given by sections throughout the book, and the more extended bibliographies contained in the Appendix.

Informed workers in character education will warmly approve the writer's emphasis on the position that character is the product of the total experience and not of a narrow specialized type of instruction. No comfort is given here to those who expect character to spring from twenty or thirty minutes a week of instruction on a specified list of virtues.

Some will criticize the book for its failure to put more direct emphasis on the discovery and treatment of the maladjusted, or problem child. For, do the best we may with constructive programs, every school still has its quota of children who are misfits and who require special attention and treatment; or, lacking this, join the increasing army of youthful delinquents. The influence of physical factors on adjustment and character also receives but incidental notice. Absence of all reference to religion is

probably due to the fact that the book deals with the public school, from which religion is by agreement excluded.

The pictorial illustrations add little except to the cost, which at three dollars will seem high to many hard-pressed teachers.

GEORGE H. BETTS.

Northwestern University.

Discipleship. By LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.00.

A BOOK from the pen of the Rev. Leslie D. Weatherhead will be sure to contain something of real value for every pastor who has to come into contact with "flesh and blood" people. He speaks with evident authority, and his words carry the accent of certainty and deep feeling. He is writing about what he has heard and seen and experienced. It is a message of life. It is difficult to conceive of anyone reading these chapters without being deeply moved even to the point of great yearning.

This book will be of great interest to all who have come in contact with the Oxford Group Fellowship. A casual glance at the table of contents would lead one to think it is a book on that Movement. But it is not. The author has borrowed the Group terms of Sharing, Guidance, Quiet Time and Fellowship as titles of his chapters. He claims they signify elemental realities in the Christian life. He does not refer to the Group Movement as though it brought no challenge to the life of our day. He gladly acknowledges his debt to the Movement. He accepts the challenge as being genuine and treats it with sympathetic understanding based on a deep experience, with all the skill of a psychological expert—as he is known to be. The book is a call to all those who are

referring to the Group Movement as something "we have had from the beginning," to differentiate between a beautiful memory and a present dynamic experience. By its independent and critical consideration it contains a warning to those who are merely following a "movement," also to those who think the spiritual values proclaimed by the Group Movement cannot be experienced in the Fellowship of the Church. The counsels of the book on the disputed questions of Confession and Guidance are keen, cautious and helpful.

The closing chapter, on the "Burden of God," is brief but in a few paragraphs he sets forth its meaning in such a way as should send every minister and every reader out to change the world in His Name and for His sake.

This book is a brotherly message from the cultured mind and glowing heart of an eminently successful pastor. Every pastor should read it.

J. S. LADD THOMAS.

First Methodist Episcopal Church,
Germantown, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Four Gospels. A New Translation. By CHARLES CUTLER TORREY. New York: Harper & Brothers. \$3.00.

All lovers of the New Testament will give a warm welcome to this new translation of the gospels, rich with the results of Dr. Torrey's life-long study of the Aramaic language. It is not easy for those of the Greek persuasion who have lived most of their days in the tents of Japhet to accommodate themselves to the point of view of eminent Hebraists like Dr. Torrey, who views the New Testament from the tents of Shem. The distinguished translator seems to have very little sympathy with the dwellers in the opposite tent and in his

essay on the "Origin of the Gospels," appended to this translation, he shoots at them more than one arrow of scorn. Here is one barbed arrow from pp. 284-285. "Every advocate of an original Semitic text of these wonderful records knows what a barrier is before him. The Greek is here; and his postulated original is gone for ever. He is inclined to say to himself that the only evidence that could make any impression on his colleagues of the Greek persuasion would be the resurrection of one of the Aramaic or Hebrew texts, say in Egypt. But on second thought he will add doubtfully, 'If they hear not my reconstructed text, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead.' He feels that through his suggested emendations certain difficulties are removed; but it is easy to say and believe, that they are cast out by Beelzebub." That sentence was written in 1918. Since then the writings of the learned professor have exercised a converting influence on the dwellers of the tents of Japhet, but I am sure that even the unconverted among them would not accuse Dr. Torrey of collusion with Beelzebub! If we are to discover the living waters in these wonderful New Testament records, we shall need the divining wands of the Hebraist and Hellenist.

Doctor Torrey sets out on his task of translation with the firm conviction that our four gospels are direct translations of Aramaic gospels and that there is nothing in them which could not have been written twenty years after the cross of Christ. This is an astoundingly early dating of the gospels and is opposed to the considered verdict of nearly all modern critics and as regards the fourth gospel against the tradition of antiquity which places its composition later than Revelation (see Bacon's *Gospel of the*

Hellenists, pp. 120-122). Though one may not agree with Dr. Torrey's thesis concerning Aramaic gospels in the extreme form in which he states it, one cannot but express real gratitude to him for showing what a useful instrument retranslation of the Greek back to Aramaic can be in the hands of a scholar for interpreting some difficult Gospel sayings, but this instrument is only one among many and we cannot too often remind ourselves that retranslation to Aramaic must always be a highly conjectural process. The retranslated Aramaic must remain "a conjectural restoration and conjectural emendations are an insecure basis for argument." Readers of the translation must bear in mind also that when Lagrange, Burney, Welhausen, and Torrey try to reconstruct the Aramaic text behind the sayings of Jesus, all four arrive at different conclusions.

Another precaution needs to be stated. Dr. Torrey seems to give us the impression (and in this he follows Dr. Burney) that when the reconstruction to Aramaic has been made, the task of higher criticism is over. So far as the chief grounds of criticism are concerned, as Dr. Bacon claims in the above mentioned volume, "We remain precisely where we were before, the horse is the same even if not of the same color." Instead of stating his theory in so extreme a form it would have been better (and that is virtually what the translator has done) for Dr. Torrey to have confined himself to that small nest of passages which have presented from time immemorial real difficulties to the translator. In the Sermon on the Mount, for example, there are only four or five verses in which retranslation has supplied any radical change.

In his renderings the English Revised

Version has been freely used and care has been taken to avoid modern idioms and colloquialisms; circumlocutions have been avoided and yet an effort made to preserve some flavor of antiquity. Let us now consider some of Dr. Torrey's translations of specific passages. The difficult petition in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6. 13), "Lead us not into temptation," is rendered "Let us not yield to temptation"; so likewise Jesus' words to his disciples in Gethsemane (Luke 22. 46), "Why do you sleep? Up, and pray not to fail in the trial!" Underlying the Greek phrase, usually translated, "Lead us not into temptation," Dr. Torrey thinks there is a popular idiom of Palestinian Aramaic. "The root meaning required in these passages is 'fail,' 'succumb,' 'yield'; thus interpreted the passages come to their rights. The corresponding Hebrew verb 'bo' appears in an idiom somewhat like this in 1 Samuel 25. 26." This new rendering simplifies a petition that has perplexed many and illustrates excellently the value of Dr. Torrey's method.

For the usual rendering of Matthew 5. 48, "Be ye perfect," etc., the author substitutes, "Be ye therefore all-including (in your goodwill), even as your Heavenly Father includes all," for the following reasons. He asserts that Matthew has given the word "g'mar"—the Aramaic word which Dr. Torrey says Jesus used—a passive rather than an active force and that "h'wo gamrin" meant "be all-including, making no exception in your kindness." Secondly, to Dr. Torrey the thought of perfection is wholly unprepared for: "Nothing leads up to the idea of perfection to say nothing of equaling the perfection of God!" The first reason for the emendation may be correct, though we do not

know how Dr. Torrey can be so confident that "g'mar" was the Aramaic word used. There is an Aramaic word for "perfect," namely, "sh'lem"; its Hebrew cognate "Shalem" occurs in 1 Kings 8. 61; 11. 4 and is rendered in the Septuagint by the Greek "teleios," which is the very word used in this passage in the Greek New Testament. We cannot concur with Dr. Torrey's conclusion that the passage leading up to the great injunction does not prepare for it, for if one tries to carry out the command "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you," he is well on the way to moral perfection. We ought to value this translation if only for the changed rendering of the perplexing passage, Luke 16. 8, 9. This is how Dr. Torrey has rendered it: "Did the lord of the estate praise his faithless manager because he had acted shrewdly (for the sons of this world are more sagacious than the sons of light, in their dealings with their fellow men)? And do I say unto you, 'Gain friends for yourselves with base lucre so that when it is gone, you may be received into the eternal abodes'?" The Aramaic interrogation, Dr. Torrey informs us in his notes, ordinarily has no interrogative particle; the interpretation rests with the reader. The affirmations of the Greek text should be read as interrogations. With this new rendering it would be interesting to know how Dr. Torrey interprets the parable as a whole. Does he find the key in any one of the four sayings appended to the parable or does he regard the story as an illustration of a type of conduct which the followers of Christ must avoid?

Every minister of the church must find a place for this stimulating translation, side by side with those of Moffatt,

Goodspeed, Weymouth and the Twentieth Century Translation.

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The New Church and the New Germany. *A Study of Church and State.* By CHARLES S. MACFARLAND. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.25.

AN excellent analysis of the German church situation based upon personal investigation and documentary evidence. During his many years of service as General Secretary of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, Doctor Macfarland established contacts with the leading men in European church life and had ample opportunity to become familiar with church conditions in the various European countries. When he went to Germany last October to make a first-hand study of the present conditions he was thoroughly conversant with the movements and the tendencies that led up to the recent developments. Thus the observations contained in his book are not the result merely of his conferences with over sixty political and church leaders, including Adolf Hitler, but have the background of familiarity with the history of the past.

In the chapter describing the organization of the new Evangelical Reichs-church and the relation to the National Socialistic State the author calls attention to the interest of Hitler in church matters as well as his limitations in his conception of the real character of the Church of Christ. The chapter on the conflicting parties within the Evangelical Church is especially informing as it shows the various tendencies and gives an accurate narrative of the conflict up to the end of last year. However, develop-

ments of the last few weeks have again changed the picture. Toward the end of last year it looked as though Hitler would not attempt to meet by force what "threatened to be a counter revolution among the pastors of the churches," but seemed to become as Doctor Macfarland puts it "the protector of the church from the mistakes of his overzealous followers." The latest developments show the strong hand of Hitler's iron man, Hermann Goering. The revolution of the pastors has been squelched by force. The leader of the Emergency Committee has been suspended, a prominent pastor in Berlin has been beaten up, the Emergency Committee is to be dissolved, Bishop Mueller, whose position seemed very shaky, several bishops having informed him that they do no longer recognize his authority, rules again with a firm hand, the bishops having pledged themselves to support him. It is intimated that this action was forced by the threat to withdraw all State subsidies in case the leaders remain recalcitrant. The German Church now reaps the fruits of her financial dependence upon the State. The separation from the State enacted in 1918 did not mean the relinquishment of State subsidies. Now the totalitarian State claims that furnishing the means of subsistence includes the right to direct and prescribe the policy. Whether or not the individual pastors will allow themselves to be coerced, or will adhere to their liberty of conscience regardless of consequences, remains to be seen. We are sure that many will do so. The revolt within the organized State-supported church seems at this juncture to be crushed by the State.

The chapter on "The Youth Movement" will have to be re-written in the light of recent developments. As a matter of fact it cannot yet be written. Bishop Mueller has signed an agreement with Baldur von Schirach, Hitler's leader of Young People's Organizations, merging all religious organizations into the Hitler Youth on condition that on two Sundays a month the church young people should be excused from attendance upon the Hitler Youth meetings and drills. The Bishop's decision has caused a storm of indignation. Protests have showered in upon him. His authority to enter into an agreement of this kind has been questioned. The matter has not been settled at the time of this writing. The present reviewer ventures the opinion that the State will not yield. The fixed policy is to bring eventually every German boy and girl into the Hitler Youth in order to have absolute control of the education of the coming generation.

Doctor Macfarland's book is valuable not only on account of his personal observations and judgments but also as a collection of documents bearing on the situation. But neither the new Germany nor the new church is a finished product. Both are still in the making. The concluding chapter contains some very pertinent observations along this line. The new Church of Germany has thus far been more a matter of organization than of enlarged spiritual power. The insistence of thousands of pastors upon liberty of conscience in obedience to God's revealed will may, and we pray it will, result in filling the form with a new content.

JOHN L. NUELSEN.

Zurich, Switzerland.

Bookish Brevities

SHERWOOD EDDY estimates that Soviet Russia is now publishing more books than Great Britain, Germany and America combined.

.....
"I don't care for personal property," Burne-Jones is reported to have said, "but if I did, I think it would be for painted books. They are such little worlds all to themselves, and many a time I have gone to the British Museum to get away from this obstreperous world."

.....
In 1933, for the first time in four years, the sales of books were ahead of the previous year. It is a portent of the times that *Anthony Adverse* led the procession. Among religious books the sales of *Christ and Human Suffering* by E. Stanley Jones, surpassed the total sales of several of the other best sellers.

.....
Principal A. E. Garvie, author of *Can Christ Save Society?*, deserves to be known beyond his reputation as an eminent theologian. He was first prizeman in economics in Edinburgh University and spent six years as a successful business man in Glasgow. In 1914-1918 he sought to neutralize the acid produced by the war by reading his evening portion of scripture from a German translation.

.....
The Varieties of Religious Experience, by William James, is the one book on religion in the list of the fifty best books in American literature as compiled by Edward Weeks and read before the Institute of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University.

In the list of one hundred best books for undergraduate reading, which was made public a few weeks ago by the National Council of Teachers of English, the Bible (King James Version) was the only book named under the title of Religion.

.....
The author of a recent volume, put out by a reputable publishing house, in requesting a review added: "A very prominent churchman, who also will review the book, writes, 'In our published reviews we aim to give space only to the positive, appreciative things that can be said, giving little space to the critical, faultfinding, mistakefinding side of a review. If I should find bases for destructive criticism, most, if not all, of these will be communicated to you personally.'"

"I like this statement and hope other reviewers will follow a similar policy" is the comment of the author. And yet the perpetrator of such a missive has written an objective and impartial book which on the whole is praiseworthy.

.....
Professor Rudolf Metz of Heidelberg is the highest German authority on English and American philosophy. In the *Kant-Studien*, Helt 3/4 of Band XXXVIII, 1933, Professor Metz writes of *The Problem of God*, by Professor Edgar S. Brightman: "This book is thoughtful, clear, and appealing. From the point of view of feeling and of faith we shall probably rebel against the idea of the limitation of divine perfection and infinity, but from a purely theoretical standpoint the idea of the finite,

suffering, enduring, struggling, and conquering God contains fewer difficulties than that of the absolute and infinite God, even though this does not mean that all of the intellectual difficulties of this dangerous and abysmal realm have been avoided. . . . However that may be, we must admit that the solution of this ancient riddle offered by the author is new and unique, and manifests admirably the conscientiousness, honesty, and straightforwardness of his thinking. The style also shares these advantages: it is simple, concise, clear and impressive in this as in all the other works of our author."

Though often multi-syllabled in word and quite complicated in structure, the hymns of Dr. Percy Dearmer are receiving increasing favor. "Christianity and the Crisis," which he edited, is obtaining quite a reading. His "Handbook of Public Worship in Anglican Churches" promises to become an authoritative volume on devotion. Lecturing recently in Westminster Abbey on "The Bible as Poetry," Dr. Dearmer forcefully described the forbidding form in which the Bible is presented. "It is like binding up Tennyson, Bunyan, Macaulay, and Shakespeare in one volume, with the titles of all the poems and essays cut out and the names of the speakers and divisions of the speeches removed, as well as quotation marks. The whole is then divided into chapters, which sometimes cut right across the meaning, and are subdivided into sentences of a convenient length for parsing. Any publisher who attempted to bring out new books in such a form, and in the typography only too common, would be ruined in twelve months."

The author of this magnanimous poem

is the leading Rabbi of Brooklyn, New York. The Eighth Avenue Temple, where he ministers, has a property value of more than a million dollars. In his large congregation are many civic leaders, notably several jurists of wide distinction.

THE CROSS

To me the cross of Christ doth bring
 Promise of a nobler thing
 Than race or nationalistic creed.
 A grander hope inspired the deed
 Of him who on the cross did die
 To lift man's life to God on high,
 That man to man should brother be,
 Each bound to each in sympathy,
 That Heaven's blessings all may share
 As tokens of God's loving care.
 'Tis this the Christ doth signify
 As child of God sent from on high.
 How then shall we due honor show?
 By striving the same path to go
 O'er which he wished mankind to lead
 With loving vision turned to deed.

ALEXANDER LYONS.

Paul Tillich has been recognized, since the translation of his book *The Religious Situation*, by Professor Richard Niebuhr, as one of the most important of living thinkers on religion.

Dean Knudson holds that German theology is the only theology there is. Ritschl, Hermann, Kaftan and Otto have long attracted the attention of American theologians. Barth, Brunner, and Tillich are more recent recipients of discussion.

Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy* and Karl Barth's *Commentary on Romans* are the two most influential theological works of our period. Ernst Troeltsch was the chief critic of the emphases of these books and Tillich was Troeltsch's outstanding student.

The modern world of Europe and America, in which man endeavors to be self-sufficient and to live by self-directed effort, contends Tillich, can be viewed only as a protest against Christianity. These endeavors, Tillich holds, have failed and man's confidence has oozed away.

His basic thought is that religion is a realistic tension between the temporal and the eternal (in the sense of unconditioned reality). Religion is the fundamental function of the human spirit, for it is man's rooting in, and reaction to, the ground of his existence, and this is determinative in the destiny of the individual and of all society.

Tillich holds that Christianity is still clinging to the conservative forms of its past, or defending theism, or allying itself with profane demonic forces, and

that it is failing to give attention in any fundamental way to the genuinely religious aspects of such challenging movements as socialism, or the new movements in art and literature. Meanwhile, the forms of the world are fast becoming meaningless and man wanders about like a lost child, unable to take hold anywhere.

Belief-ful realism is the attitude toward the universe which Tillich advocates. God expresses himself in a human personality but that human cannot say that he possesses God, for God always transcends his life and the totality of all life.

This combination of the ruggedness of the realist and the hopefulness of the idealist which are exemplified in Professor Tillich is attractive and also not a little baffling.

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